Mount Robson Provincial Park

MASTER PLAN

Prepared by

Prince George District

Northern B.C. Region

Prince George, B.C.

BC Parks

92-06734/

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data
Main entry under title:
Master plan for Mount Robson Provincial Park.

Cover title.
ISBN 0-7726-1587-X

1. Parks - British Columbia - Planning. 2. Parks - British Columbia - Management. 3. Mount Robson Provincial Park (B.C.) I. BC Parks.

FC3815.M68M37 1992 333.78'3'0971182 C92-092237-6
F1089.M68M37 1992

Mount Robson

Provincial Park

Master Plan

Recommended: _____ Date: March 9/92

District Manager,
Prince George District

Approved: _____ Date: May 6/92

Assistant Deputy Minister

Table of Contents

Plan Highlights 1

Introduction 2
- Purpose of the Plan 2
- Planning Issues 3

Background Summary 4

The Role of the Park 6
- Regional and Provincial Context 6
- Conservation Role 6

Recreation Role 7

Park Zoning 8
- Wilderness Conservation Zone 8
- Wilderness Recreation Zone 10
- Natural Environment Zone 10
- Intensive Recreation Zone 10

Natural and Cultural Resources Management 12
- Land 13
  - Boundary 13
  - Inholdings and Other Tenures 14
- Water 16
- Vegetation 17
- Wildlife 19
- Fish 20
- Cultural Resources 22
- Visual Resources 23
- Outdoor Recreation Features 24

Visitor Services 27
- General Concept 27
  - Travel Route 27
  - Outdoor Recreation Holiday Destination 27
  - Backcountry Recreation 27
  - Local Recreation 28
  - Continuity of Experience 28
- Access Strategy 28
- Information Strategy 31
  - Awareness and Pre-Trip Planning 32
  - Orientation and Information 33
  - Natural and Cultural Heritage Education 34
- Marketing and Promotion 35

Management Services 37
Outdoor Recreation Opportunities 38
Angling 38
Backcountry Hiking 39
Boating 39
Frontcountry Camping 41
Horse Use 42
Mountaineering 43
Mountain Biking 44
Resource Appreciation 46
Sightseeing 47
Winter Recreation 47

Plan Implementation 49

Appendix A BC Parks System Goals 51

Appendix B Zoning in BC Parks 52

Appendix C Management Units 57

Appendix D Public Comments 65

List of Figures

Figure 1: Regional Setting 5
Figure 2: Zoning 9
Figure 3: Proposed Boundary Studies 15
Figure 4A: Recreational Features in Mount Robson 25
Figure 4B: Recreational Features - Detailed Maps 26
Figure 5: Management Units 81

List of Plates

Plate 1: The View from Kinney Lake 7
Plate 2: The Highway Corridor running through Mount Robson Park 11
Plate 3: Hiking along Berg Lake 12
Plate 4: Overlander Falls 16
Plate 5: Moose in Moose Marsh 20
Plate 6: Horseback Riding 28
Plate 7: Mt. Robson reflected in the Robson River 30
Plate 8: Interpreter in front of Visitor Centre 35
Plate 9: Mount Robson Park Entrance 37
Plate 10: Camping in Robson Meadows Campground 42
Plate 11: Mountaineering 44
Plate 12: Wildlife along the Highway 48

Acknowledgements

This plan was produced by a team of staff from Northern B.C. Region, the Prince George District and Victoria Headquarters with input from the general public and interest groups.

Kris Kennett, Planner from the Northern B.C. Region in Prince George coordinated and prepared the plan under the direction of Victor Bopp, District Manager of the Prince George District. Wayne Van Velzen, Zone Manager of Mt. Robson Zone and Roger Norrish, Master Plan Coordinator, Victoria provided much assistance and expertise. Staff from the park, the regional office and headquarters contributed to the preparation of this plan.

BC Parks would like to give special recognition to members of the public and interest groups who took the time to participate through the open houses, meetings and written comments.

Plan Highlights

- Mount Robson Provincial Park is one of the best known parks in British Columbia As part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site, it protects an outstanding natural area and also offers outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities. As well, it also serves as a travel route and a holiday destination.

- Wilderness character of Mount Robson Park will be preserved; 80% or 176,000 hectares of the park has been zoned for wilderness conservation and wilderness recreation which controls mechanized access and facility development.

- Natural processes will predominate, but park visitors, facilities and adjacent commercial forests will be protected. To manage the natural ecosystem, a forest management plan will be prepared. A specific Travel Corridor vegetation plan will be developed. It will address steps to intervene on an otherwise evolving system in order to protect scenic values, wildlife, biodiversity and wildlife.

- Possible boundary adjustments on the west side of the park will be investigated to protect conservation values, visual qualities, and recreation features such as the caves in the Small River area.

- The Berg Lake Corridor is a world renowned backcountry destination that is under pressure from the large number of users; a management plan for the area will be developed to protect the visitors' experience and the environment.

- The park contains vital wildlife habitats and supports a variety of wildlife populations. To manage these, an overall wildlife management plan will be developed. A Travel Corridor wildlife management plan will be prepared specifically to address wildlife concerns on the Travel Corridor. Initiatives will be undertaken to manage wildlife in conjunction with Jasper National Park and BC Environment.

- Helicopters will be allowed through park use permits to land only at specially designated sites in the Wilderness Recreation Zones and in the Robson Pass area of the Berg Lake Natural Environment Zone. Flight corridors and the days and hours of flights will be limited in the Robson Pass area.

Introduction

Mount Robson Provincial Park is one of British Columbia's best known and oldest parks. It is recognized for its conservation role in both protecting the unspoiled wilderness of the Rocky Mountains in British Columbia and preserving the special features such as the headwaters of the Fraser River and Mt. Robson which is the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies. Together with Jasper and Banff National Parks, Mount Robson Park encompasses internationally significant wilderness and wildlife habitat and has recently been designated as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Environmental, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Another contributing factor to the park's fame is the key transprovincial highway that passes through the park. The Yellowhead Highway connects Mount Robson with the Rocky Mountain national parks in Alberta and exposes tourists and highway travellers to spectacular mountain scenery. In addition, the highway provides access to the park's outstanding recreation features and experiences.

Mount Robson Park offers unique and distinct experiences, such as driving the Travel Corridor, hiking the Berg Lake Trail, climbing Mt. Robson, experiencing the Rocky Mountain wilderness, and camping in the aura of Mt. Robson. These activities are heavily dependent on the natural resources of the park. Consequently, management of recreational use is essential to maintain these high quality experiences and to protect the resources that supports them.

Rearguard Falls Park is close to Mount Robson Park and Mount Terry Fox Provincial Park adjoins the park on the southwestern boundary. These two areas contribute to the attractions and protected status of the area.

Purpose of the Plan

This master plan for Mount Robson Park defines the role of the park and establishes the objectives and desired actions to guide the management and development in the future. It also provides direction for a number of key park issues, including helicopter access, wildlife management, recreational horse use and outdoor recreation.

The Mount Robson Background Report provides information to understand the rationale behind the master plan. Those who are unfamiliar with the park or who are reviewing this Master Plan for the first time may find it useful to read the Background Report, available from the Northern B.C. Regional Office of BC Parks in Prince George.

Planning Issues

Role of the Park

Mount Robson Provincial Park serves both conservation and recreation roles established in the legislative mandate of BC Parks (Appendix A). Through protecting a section of the Rocky Mountains, the park conserves the representative landscape of the Northern Continental Ranges and its associated wildlife. The park also provides recreation opportunities for the travelling public, the holiday destination seeker and the wilderness adventurer. As land outside the park is modified, the protected wilderness in the park becomes more valuable for recreation and conservation. This Master Plan sets direction for managing this dual role with emphasis on the maintaining the wilderness character.

Park Boundary

Generally the boundary of the park encompasses whole valleys, providing the best protection of the land base. However, the straight line boundary on the west side of the park cuts across natural features and excludes areas of recreation and conservation interest. The Master Plan gives direction to address this straight line boundary and protect features of recreation and conservation value.

Management of Park Resources

Mount Robson was established to conserve vegetation, wildlife, fish, heritage resources and special features. The Master Plan sets direction for management of these resources.

Management and Development of Recreational Opportunities

The park offers a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from sightseeing and short hikes to multi-day excursions. The Master Plan establishes the compatible recreation opportunities for the park and suitable locations and provides direction for acceptable levels of use. It also addresses the role of helicopters in the park and provides direction for management of this means of access. Lastly, it outlines appropriate type and scale of commercial recreation services acceptable in the park.

Background Summary

Mount Robson Provincial Park, set aside in 1913, is the second oldest and fifth largest Class A park in British Columbia. Its boundaries encompass 219,534 hectares of rugged mountains, glaciers, alpine meadows, waterfalls and valleys. The park has a long history of recreation use and is one of the best known parks in the province.

The park lies in the central Rocky Mountains on the Alberta-British Columbia border, next to Jasper National Park, 300 kilometres east of Prince George and 450 kilometres west of Edmonton (Figure 1). Together, Mount Robson and other parks in Alberta and British Columbia encompass a large natural area which protects almost a complete cross section of the Rocky Mountains. Mount Robson itself provides full representation of the Northern Continental Ranges Landscape in British Columbia and contains a complex mountain ecosystem represented by four biogeoclimatic zones.

Mount Robson Park has a rich history, connected with the fur trade, exploration, early tourism development and the transcontinental railway. Early ascents of Robson and settlement along the railway also contribute to this historic wealth. Today, a nationally important transportation route, which includes Highway 16 and the Canadian National Railway passes through the park.

As a result of the large and varied mountain landscapes, diverse recreation opportunities are available in the park. The highway corridor receives the most use and provides the travelling public with superb mountain scenery, day-use activities, natural and cultural resource appreciation, and overnight accommodation. The park also provides outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities, such as hiking the Berg Lake Trail or climbing Mt. Robson.

Approximately 800,000 vehicles travel through the park each year; about 35% of these stop at the Visitor Centre. Over a year, an average of 38,000 campers use the campgrounds and 400,000 people enjoy the park for the day. Alberta residents are the most prevalent visitors to the park, comprising 35% of those who engage in backcountry, camping and hiking and 50% of the total users. Visitors from the United States and British Columbia make up about 25% of the backcountry visitors. British Columbia residents comprise 35% of the total campground users, while Americans account for 10%. Other Canadians and foreigners make up less than 10% of total park use.

Mount Terry Fox Provincial Park is contiguous with the southwest boundary of Mount Robson Park (Figure 1). It is a natural monument to the memory of the one-legged runner who captured the hearts of people around the world with his attempt to run across Canada, raising funds for cancer research. The park contains part of the western slopes of the Rockies and offers winter range for goats.

Rearguard Falls Park (Figure 1) was designated a Class A park in 1991. It was established to protect a regionally significant waterfall and is the last navigable barrier to the chinook salmon of the Fraser River.

MOUNT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK

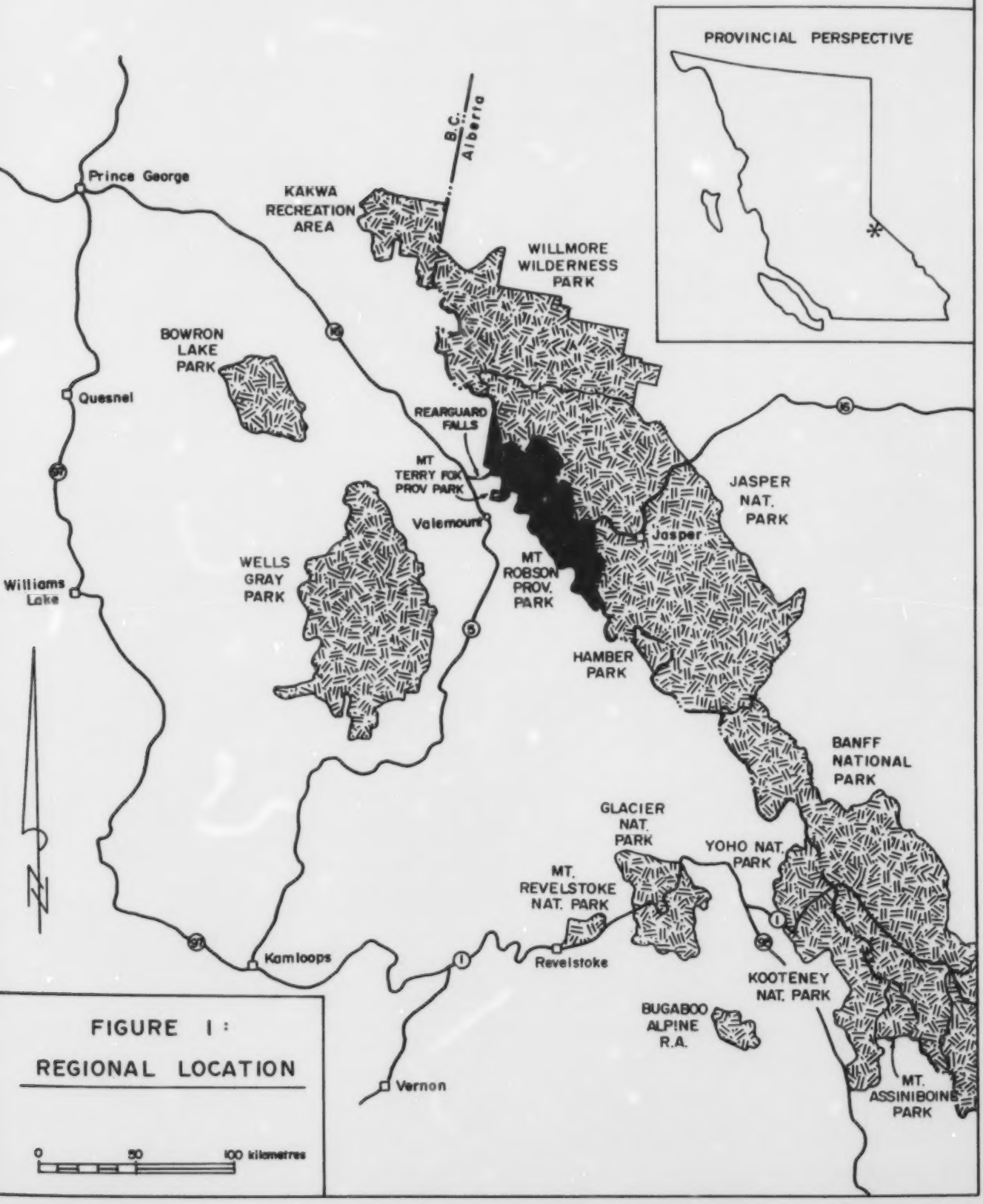


FIGURE 1:
REGIONAL LOCATION

The Role of the Park

Regional and Provincial Context

Mount Robson Park has long been acknowledged as an important conservation and outdoor recreation area. Its conservation and recreation role is further enhanced by being part of a larger protected area that includes Jasper and Banff National Parks. Together with the other Rocky Mountain parks, both national and provincial, Mount Robson protects the ecological diversity of the central and southern ranges of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. In recognition of this and of its outstanding undisturbed features, the park has joined the national parks as the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site.

In addition to protecting a representative landscape and regional ecological diversity, Mount Robson also contains special natural features, such as the headwaters of the Fraser River, the Ramparts and the Mt. Robson massif known as the "Monarch of the Rockies". These remarkable features and the available outdoor recreation opportunities in the park are highly prized by the people regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, given the transprovincial highway that runs through the park. Mount Robson is a strategically located entrance point to the province to welcome and inform visitors.

In achieving a provincial park system that reflects the needs and capabilities of the people it serves, BC Parks has developed a series of conservation and recreation goals, shown in Appendix A. Mount Robson Park plays a significant role in meeting these goals, as described below.

Conservation Role

- Approximately 176,000 hectares, or 80% of the park, is designated and protected as wilderness for present and future generations. In these areas, natural processes are allowed to continue without human interference or impact from regular recreation use.
- The regional landscape of the Northern Continental Ranges is represented satisfactorily.
- Four of the province's 14 biogeoclimatic zones are found here.
- Special features such as Mt. Robson, the Ramparts, the headwaters of the Fraser River, and alpine meadows of Resplendent Valley and Miette Pass are preserved.
- Cultural features which include prehistoric sites, travel routes of early explorers and tourists, and railway townsites are protected.

Recreation Role

- Outstanding backcountry adventures in the Canadian Rocky Mountains are available in the park. Relatively easy access is offered from the highway. Such opportunities attract regional, national and international visitors.

- People travelling on the Yellowhead Highway are treated to superb mountain scenery, roadside viewpoints and picnic stops, educational displays, short hiking trails and camping opportunities. Mount Robson Park contributes to local tourism through these attractions.

- An outdoor recreation holiday destination is available in Mount Robson Park. As part of the larger destination area of the Rocky Mountains and with opportunities for camping, wildlife viewing, short hikes, nature study, swimming, boating and fishing, the park makes an ideal family destination.

- Local recreation opportunities such as hiking, wildlife viewing, camping, fishing, picnicking, and nature study are available in the park and attract local visitors from the Valemount, McBride and Jasper areas.

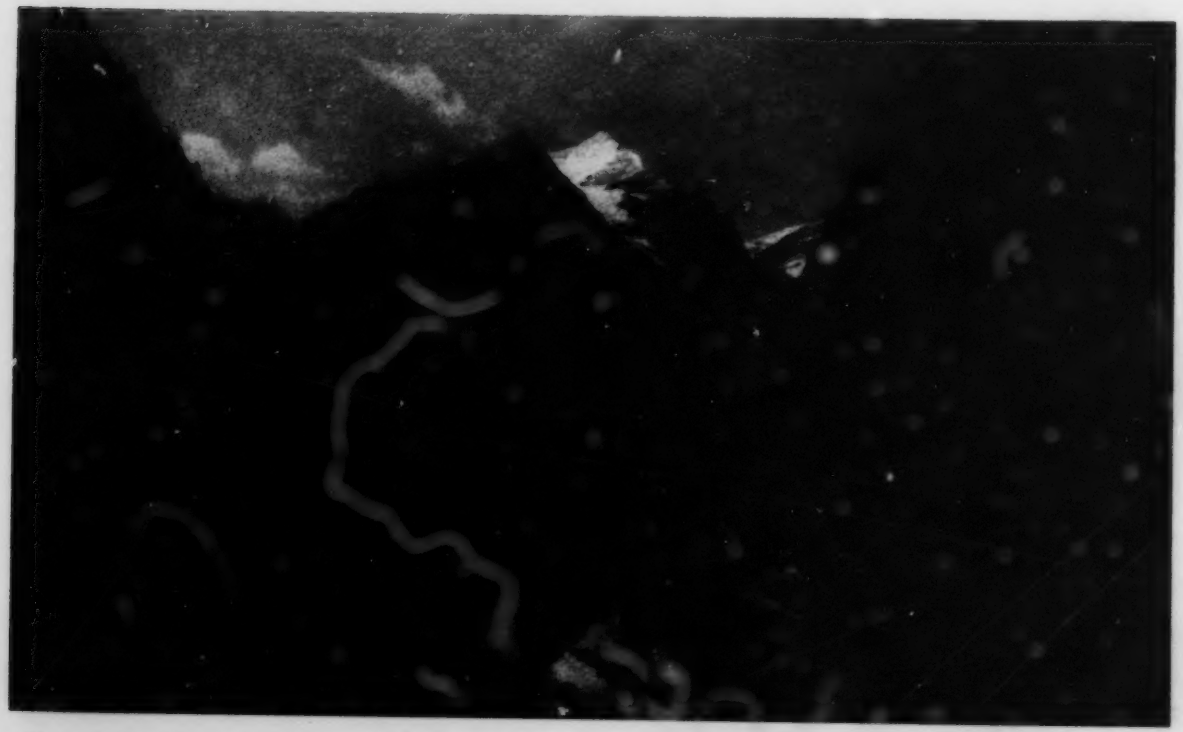


Plate 1: The View from Kinney Lake

Park Zoning

In planning and managing parks, BC Parks relies on zoning, which divides a park into logical units to apply uniform and consistent management objectives. Through identification of natural and recreational values, and analysis of existing and projected patterns of access and recreation use, the zoning defines levels and criteria for resource and visitor services management. See Appendix B for an in depth description of zoning.

As indicated in Figure 2, Mount Robson Park is separated into four zones which include Wilderness Conservation, Wilderness Recreation, Natural Environment, and Intensive Recreation. Given Mount Robson's conservation role, the areal extent of the wilderness designations, particularly the Wilderness Conservation Zone, is maximized to protect the wildlife and wilderness values of the area. This plan complements zoning of Jasper National Park.

The Special Feature Zone is not used in Mount Robson Park. The special features of the park are located in the highly protected designations of Wilderness Conservation or Wilderness Recreation and do not require the special management guidelines indicated in the Special Feature Zone.

See Appendix C for a discussion of the zoning and management of the park by geographical unit.

Wilderness Conservation Zone

The objective of this zone is to protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where no motorized activities are allowed. Development is nonexistent and management strategies are directed towards conservation of the resource while allowing wilderness recreation use. In short, areas designated as Wilderness Conservation are large natural areas free of any evidence of modern human beings with very low use and no facilities.

In Mount Robson Park, this zone covers portions of the park north and south of the Highway Corridor including Whitehorn Mountain, Resplendent Valley, Upright Creek, Mt. McNaughton, and the Fraser River. Some of these areas require special protection due to their sensitive nature; others have been designated Wilderness Conservation because of their undisturbed state. This zone encompasses approximately 130,000 hectares or 58% of the park.

MOUNT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK

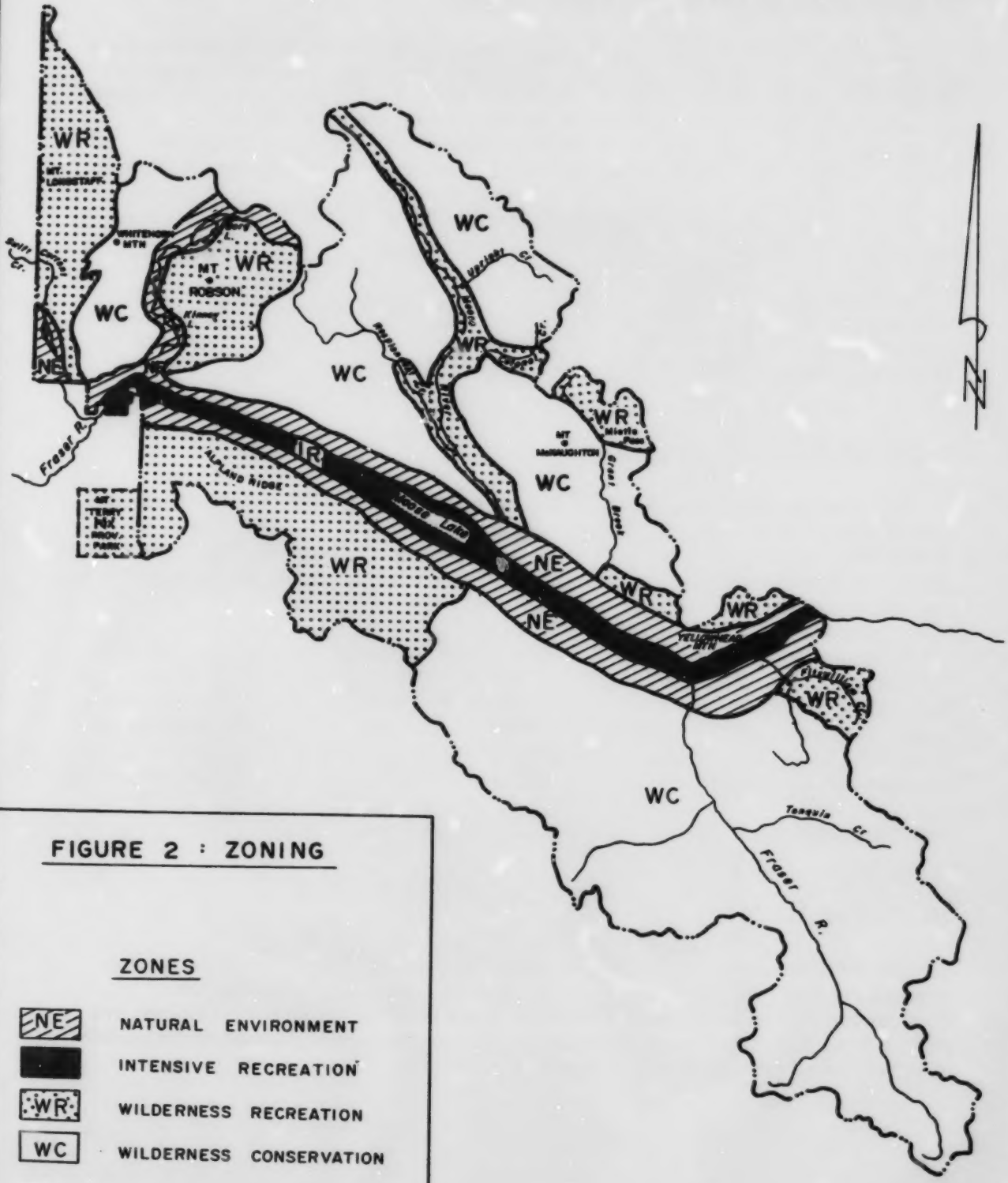


FIGURE 2 : ZONING

ZONES

- NE — NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- IR — INTENSIVE RECREATION
- WR — WILDERNESS RECREATION
- WC — WILDERNESS CONSERVATION

0 5 10 15
Kilometres

Wilderness Recreation Zone

The objective of this zone is to protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where air access may be permitted to designated sites. Facility development is minimal, at a level sufficient to satisfy user needs and concentrate use to protect the overall environment of the park. Approved facilities include trails, trail signs, designated camping areas, sanitary facilities and corrals. In summary, areas designated Wilderness Recreation are large natural areas where natural ecological processes occur largely uninfluenced by human activity, and where low levels of recreation use are permitted but confined to specific primitive facilities and sites.

This zone covers portions of the park north and south of the Highway Corridor including the following: Mount Longstaff; Mt. Robson; the Moose River Route including Colonel Creek, Miette Pass, Grant Brook areas; Alpland and Emerald Ridges; and the Mount Fitzwilliam area. This encompasses over 49,000 hectares or 22% of the park.

Natural Environment Zone

The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values, to provide a buffer between Intensive Recreation and Wilderness Conservation Zones, and to provide for backcountry recreational opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural state. The main management concern is encouraging backcountry use while keeping impacts below levels that will impair park resources or significantly reduce user satisfaction.

In Mount Robson Park, this zone encompasses three areas: the lower portion of the Swiftcurrent Creek which has road access; the Berg Lake Corridor where the bulk of the backcountry use occurs; and the Scenic Corridor which is the transition area from the heavily used travel corridor to more remote wilderness areas. The higher levels of use in the Berg Lake Corridor and the noise and sight of the Travel Corridor may at times preclude a sense of wilderness isolation. Facilities in this area are moderately developed with trails, walk-in campsites and shelters. This zone covers approximately 35,000 hectares or 16% of the park.

Intensive Recreation Zone

The objective of this zone is to provide for a variety of readily accessible facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities. This includes areas of high facility development such as campgrounds, picnic and play areas, administrative buildings, and parking lots. The management intent of this designation is to accommodate high levels of vehicle-based users in as natural a setting as possible.

In Mount Robson Park, this zone encompasses the Travel Corridor which is the most heavily visited and developed part of the park. Located in this zone are visitor services and facilities for readily accessible day-use recreation opportunities, overnight camping, and parking at trail heads. Approximately 7,200 hectares or 3% of the park is designated for intensive recreation.

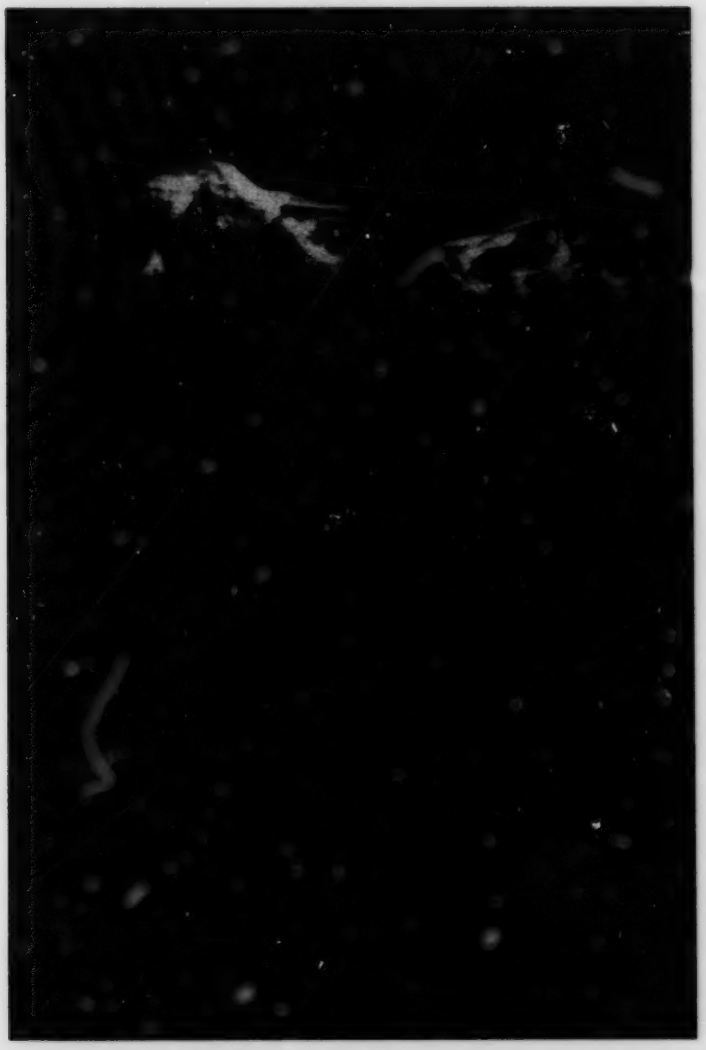


Plate 2: The Highway Corridor through Mt. Robson Park

Natural and Cultural Resources Management

Mount Robson Park has long been recognized for as an outstanding natural area. Its location next to the other protected areas in the Rocky Mountains contributes to its significance as a natural area large enough to sustain ecological diversity. The high profile of Mount Robson, increasing demand for backcountry recreation and significance of park resources dictates that the park must be protected and managed wisely. To this end, the following section sets resource management objectives and describes actions to be undertaken to protect natural features and processes.

See Appendix C for a discussion of the zoning and management of the park by geographical unit.

Plate 3: Hiking along Berg Lake

Land

Boundary

Most of the park boundary follows natural features such as the mountain ridges forming the Continental Divide. This gives the best protection to natural resources by preserving whole valleys and controlling activities in those valleys. However, part of the western boundary consists of straight lines, established in 1913, which cut across natural features and exclude, for example, the major viewpoints of Mount Robson. The boundaries of Mount Terry Fox Park are also straight lines which are difficult to administer.

The Swiftcurrent Creek drainage is an area of concern. Only a small portion of the watershed is in the park, making the boundary and the resources difficult to manage and administer. Since timber harvesting is planned outside the park on the north slopes of Mount Chamberlain, BC Parks must work closely with the Ministry of Forests and industry to address recreation, wildlife and aesthetic concerns outside the park but within the watershed.

Objective:

To protect areas adjacent to the park that have wildlife, recreation and aesthetic value through cooperative management with other agencies.

To protect the existing land area of the park while investigating opportunities to establish boundaries that follow natural boundaries and protect high park values.

Actions:

- Work with the Ministry of Forests, BC Environment, BC Lands and the Fraser-Fort George Regional District to protect wildlife, recreation and aesthetic values along park boundaries and control access into wilderness areas.

- Initiate detailed studies and discussion with various agencies, organizations and individuals to review the following areas as possible additions to the park (Figure 3):

  Small River area - on the northwest boundary where there are significant cave and fossil formations;

  Swiftcurrent Creek - on the northwest boundary to protect recreation opportunities, wildlife habitat and visual aesthetics.

  Highway Corridor - on the west boundary to retain the scenery along the Travel Corridor from the west boundary to Tete Jaune, to protect a complete cross section of the Rocky Mountains and to include Rearguard Falls as part of Mount Robson Park.

- Investigate opportunities to change the boundaries of the Mount Terry Fox Provincial Park to follow natural features.

Inholdings and Other Tenures

Mount Robson Park has been an important transportation corridor since the 1800s, resulting in many varying land rights throughout the park. Eight parcels of land are owned by TransMountain Pipeline Company and CN Railway. Fifteen separate rights of way agreement are in place for Highway 16, CN Railway, Trans Mountain Pipeline, BC Tel and BC Hydro. Three interests, which include CN Railway, Trans Mountain Pipeline and Mount Robson Provincial Park, have water rights. Thirty park use permits allow uses such as gravel extraction and occupation of cabins (see Background Report for details).

Objectives:

To manage non-conforming inholdings and tenures to meet the conservation role of the park.

To reduce, where possible, the number of non-conforming uses.

To minimize environment and visual impacts of non-conforming uses.

Actions:

- Eliminate the trapline park use permit when it becomes available as it is not consistent with the conservation and recreation goals of the park.
- Phase out private cabins and rehabilitate sites to natural state.
- Continue to work with utility and transportation agencies to minimize visual and environmental impacts.
- Investigate opportunities to consolidate non-conforming facilities, present and future, such as repeater stations and access roads.
- Permit other non-conforming facilities that benefit the people of British Columbia in Intensive Recreation Zone only.
- Continue to require permit holders to remove unnatural objects, such as buildings, and rehabilitate site to a natural state when the permit has been terminated or cancelled.
- Maintain pipeline, BC Hydro, and BC Tel rights of way as parkland for recreation opportunities, such as bike paths and cross-country ski routes.

MOUNT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK

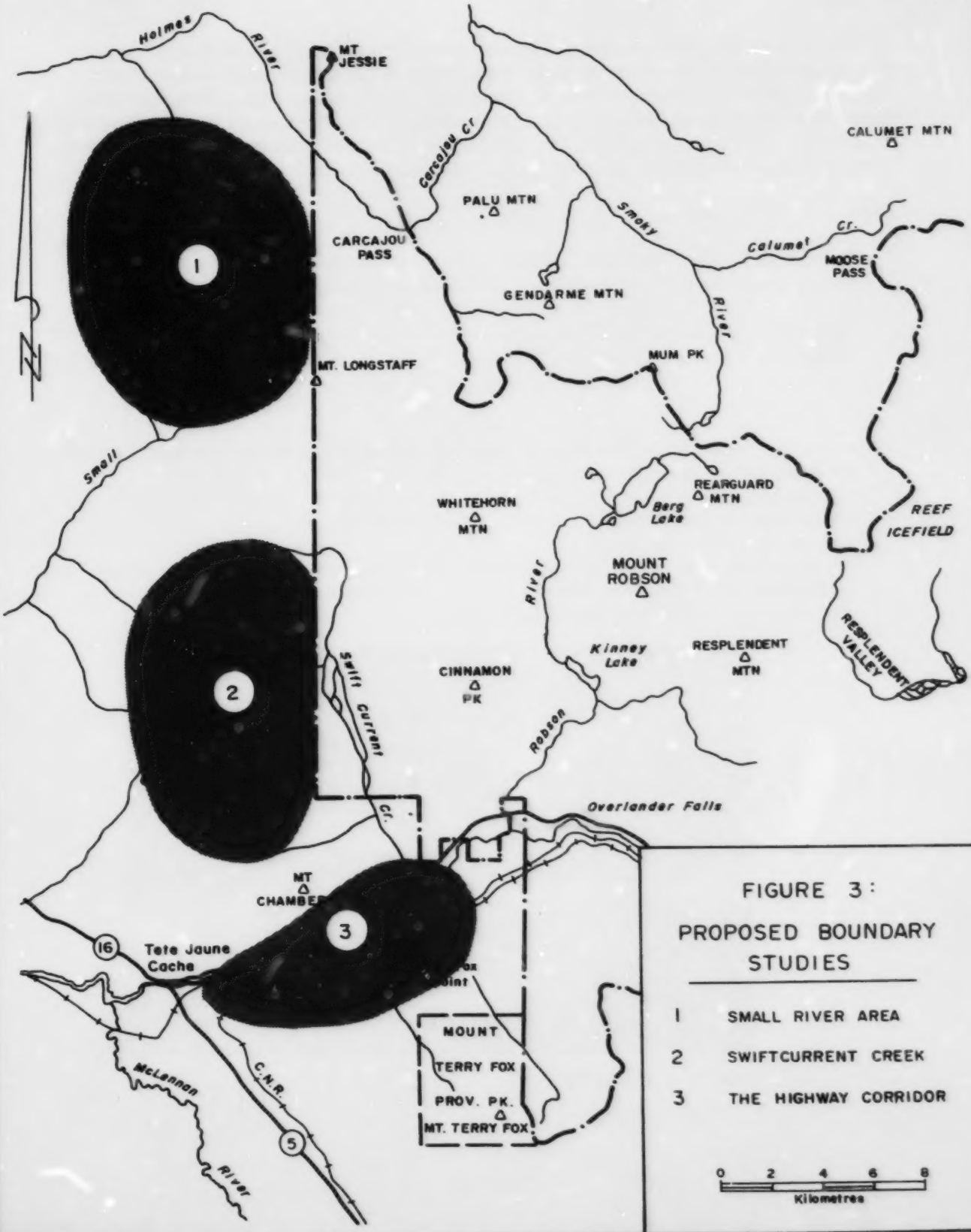


FIGURE 3:

PROPOSED BOUNDARY STUDIES

1 SMALL RIVER AREA

2 SWIFTCURRENT CREEK

3 THE HIGHWAY CORRIDOR

0 2 4 6 8

Kilometres

Water

Mount Robson Park protects the headwaters of the Fraser River and its tributaries. The preservation of this river and other high quality water resources is an important component of the conservation and recreation role of the park. In addition, Moose Marsh represents some of the only natural wetlands left in the upper Fraser watershed. Permits for water licences are held by CN Railway, Trans Mountain Pipeline and Mount Robson Provincial Park.

Objective:

To protect the headwaters of the Fraser River and maintain the pure, unpolluted quality of waters within the park for aesthetic, ecological and health considerations.

To protect the Moose Marsh as a representative wetlands and as critical wildlife habitat.

Actions:

- Discourage water impoundments, diversions and future domestic use projects within the park, except to protect transportation links from flooding or erosion.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Develop contingency plans with the Provincial Emergency Program, CN Railway, Trans Mountain Pipeline and Ministry of Transportation and Highways to address accidental spills along the Travel Corridor.

Plate 4: Overlander Falls

Vegetation

Vegetation is the basis for wildlife habitats and contributes to the visual and recreational attractions of the park. Mount Robson Park contains four of the province's fourteen biogeoclimatic zones and encompasses some special vegetation features, such as the oldest known whitebark pine in Canada. The natural processes of fire, disease and insect outbreaks are fundamental in maintaining the complex forest ecosystem but require management to safeguard important recreation values, facilities and commercial forests on adjacent lands.

Objective:

To maintain plant communities and species that create or contribute to the conservation, visual and recreation attractions of Mount Robson Park.

To maintain, where compatible with other park objectives, the established pattern of varied aged forest stands and other communities, reflecting the natural processes that occur in unmanaged forests.

To maintain the diversity of wildlife vegetation habitats in the park.

To preserve special sensitive and rare native plant communities and species.

To encourage low impact scientific studies to improve the knowledge of the park's vegetation.

To discourage the establishment of non-native species.

To encourage public appreciation of forest and vegetation values.

Actions:

- Develop a long-term vegetation management strategy for the park. Key elements in this strategy are as follows:

  - identification of regionally and locally important plant communities;
  - forest resource inventory including forest types, the occurrence of rare plant species and sensitive plant communities;
  - wildlife habitat inventory including critical winter and summer range;
  - fire suppression and management including an assessment of the fire history;
  - management of disease and insect outbreaks;
  - vegetation management along the Travel Corridor, including prescribed burning;
  - land uses in adjacent areas;
  - protection of key forest and vegetation values by the application of sensitive management techniques.

- Prepare a fire management strategy to protect the park infrastructure and commercial forests outside the park, to resemble natural processes which will maintain plant and animal diversity and to reduce the probabilities of a large wildfire. Also included will be public evacuation measures, priority control areas and fire control methods. Until the fire management strategy is prepared, all wildfire is subject to initial attack either by the Ministry of Forests or BC Parks. Once the situation is assessed, the fire may be allowed to run its natural course within the Wilderness Recreation and Wilderness Conservation Zones as long as visitors, adjacent commercial forests and park facilities are not in danger.

- Develop a control program for disease and insect outbreaks which will balance the ecological role of endemic levels, with the threat of outbreaks spreading to commercial forests, and severe degradation of the highly valued corridor scenery. Items to be included are: criteria for a control program; methods of control; management of fire hazards and blowdown; threats to wildlife habitat and rare plant communities; and the role in maintaining ecological diversity. Until such a plan is prepared and dictates otherwise, a selective tree removal program will be undertaken along the western boundaries or in Natural Environment and Intensive Recreation Zones only. The purpose would be to prevent the spread of insects and disease to commercial forests in British Columbia and into Alberta (Jasper National Park) and to protect views from the Travel Corridor.

- Develop a Travel Corridor vegetation management plan for the Intensive Recreation and Natural Environment Zones along the corridor. Issues to be addressed include: maintenance of scenic qualities, protection of facilities, prescribed burning and reduction in wildlife mortalities on highway and railway. To accomplish this, steps may be taken to intervene in the otherwise evolving ecosystem of the park.

- Protect sensitive or unique vegetation communities from adverse impacts of recreational uses including the grazing of horses.

- Maintain close contact with the Ministry of Forests and industry in the review of the forest development plans in the various drainages leading to the park boundary to protect aesthetics, recreation and wilderness values.

- Retain trees and snags for wildlife habitat except those that present a hazard to people or facilities.

- Work with the Canadian Park Service in developing a consistent vegetation management plan to address fires and disease and insect outbreaks in the World Heritage Site.

Wildlife

Mount Robson Provincial Park is home to a large variety of wildlife species, from mountain goats, moose and grizzly bears to shrews and voles to frogs and salamanders. The park is part of a larger protected area which conserves the ecological diversity of the Rocky Mountains. Such an area allows the movement of wide-ranging species and migration between gene pools so that genetically diverse populations are able to sustain viable populations over the long term. In providing protection, steps must be taken to preserve critical habitats and reduce mortalities as a result of highway traffic, trains and poachers on the Travel Corridor.

Wildlife viewing is a popular recreational opportunity and often strengthens the bond visitors have with the park. However, it is imperative that the animals are not disturbed, particularly in times of physiological stress during winter or spring.

Objectives:

To maintain and protect the natural diversity of wildlife species and populations.

To protect critical habitats and enhance declining habitats where it is compatible with other park resource management and recreation use objectives.

To provide public viewing and non-consumptive appreciation of wildlife.

To encourage scientific research in the park, particularly those with direct management benefits.

Actions:

- Develop a long-term management plan for wildlife in the park. Key elements in this strategy include:
  - ongoing wildlife inventory;
  - inventory of habitat requirements of species with particular reference to critical habitats;
  - role of fire, insect and disease in terms of creating a range of habitats including snags for various bird and animal species;
  - transboundary management;
  - opportunities for research programs;
  - control of animals such as beavers when their actions threaten to flood the Travel Corridor.
- Develop a Travel Corridor wildlife management plan based on critical feeding habitats, winter range and migration routes. Use public information to create awareness for hazards faced by wildlife along the Travel Corridor.

- Continue to implement recommendations from the bear hazard assessment to reduce conflicts between bears and park visitors.
- Prepare an environmental assessment of any future recreational development in the Intensive Recreation, Natural Environment and Wilderness Recreation Zones.
- Consider wildlife habitat enhancement measures only in the Natural Environment and Intensive Recreation Zones.
- Maintain a hunting closure in the park.
- Acquire the existing trapline territory in the east end of the park as it is inconsistent with conservation and recreation goals.
- Cooperate and establish common objectives with Jasper National Park and BC Environment to manage trans-boundary populations and identify habitat requirements.
- Develop wildlife viewing opportunities at Moose Marsh.
- Investigate opportunities to work with the Canadian Park Service, Alberta Parks and other B.C. parks to manage for carnivore populations (including grizzly bears) in response to the World Wildlife Funds' call for Carnivore Conservation Areas.
- Protect the park's limited wetlands to maintain the natural environment and the diverse bird populations.

Plate 5: Moose in Moose Marsh

Fish

The Fraser River supports an internationally important salmon run, the easterly extent being Overlander Falls. However, in the rest of the park, fish populations and species diversity are low due to the cold, silty lakes and streams. Moose, Yellowhead and Lucerne Lakes and a number of smaller lakes, creeks and streams have native populations, while Witney and Portal Lakes are regularly stocked with rainbow trout. Some lakes lack fish altogether. Recreational angling opportunities in the park are limited.

Objective:

To conserve viable natural fish populations while providing opportunities for viewing and limited recreational fishing.

Actions:

- Encourage fishing in the Intensive Recreation Zone only.
- Direct angling to Portal and Witney Lakes and continue enhancement measures and restrictions as required. Monitor fishing effort through creel census and success of management activities.
- Assess potential fishery enhancement through natural production in Moose and Yellowhead Lakes, by addressing suitability and environmental and social impacts.
- Maintain all alpine lakes in natural state.
- Enhance fish viewing opportunities at Rearguard Falls through educational signs.

Cultural Resources

Mount Robson Park has three main sources of cultural themes:

1) the prehistoric record;
2) the historic significance of the Yellowhead Pass; and
3) the early ascents of Mount Robson.

The archaeological record indicates that early inhabitants may have established hunting camps in the Fraser Valley. The Yellowhead Pass has played a major role as a travel route for Indians, fur traders, explorers, the early tourists, the railways and the Yellowhead Highway. Early attempts to climb the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies have added to the colourful dimension to the history of Mount Robson Park.

Objectives:

To preserve the cultural resource values which relate to the rich history of the park.

To provide information and education on the park's heritage.

Actions:

- Inventory and assess cultural resources for educational and recreational potential, for scientific needs, and for protective status.
- Develop appropriate management strategies for identified heritage sites.
- Undertake a heritage impact assessment prior to any development, particularly along the Travel Corridor.
- Work with Jasper National Park to develop educational themes along Highway 16 across the Rockies.
- Develop heritage education programs using the Visitor Centre, sites and trails.
- Establish direct contact with the Shuswap and the Carrier-Sekani native people to determine significance of the Mount Robson area in their culture and subsistence.

Visual Resources

The scenery in and around Mount Robson Provincial Park is fundamental to the visitor's experience. It is a particularly strong component along the Highway Corridor and the Berg Lake Corridor.

Objective:

To retain views in and out of park so that the visual qualities and wilderness atmosphere of the park are protected.

Actions:

- Recognize that the Intensive Recreation Zone encompassing the Travel Corridor is a modified landscape where the naturally evolving system is interfered with to provide services, protect facilities and wildlife, and maintain scenic qualities. Manage the Corridor in an environmentally sensitive manner, using every opportunity to benefit wildlife populations.

- Continue to provide and manage a variety of road-side interpretive viewpoints in the Intensive Recreation Zone, including the Terry Fox Viewpoint.

- Work with other agencies including the Ministry of Forests, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, the Regional District, CN Railway, BC Tel, BC Hydro and Trans Mountain Pipeline to minimize visual impacts of activities such as logging, gravel pits, development of private land, particularly where scenic values are considered important.

- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting.

- Work with Jasper National Park to retain the scenic qualities and coordinate interpretive stops along the highway.

Outdoor Recreation Features

Mount Robson Park protects outstanding recreation features such as the Berg Lake Corridor and extraordinary special features such as Mt. Robson, the Ramparts and Miette Pass, which also support recreation (Figure 4A and 4B). All of these features contribute to Mount Robson's recreation and conservation role, but vary in terms of sensitivity and ability to support visitors. Consequently, they require different management prescriptions.

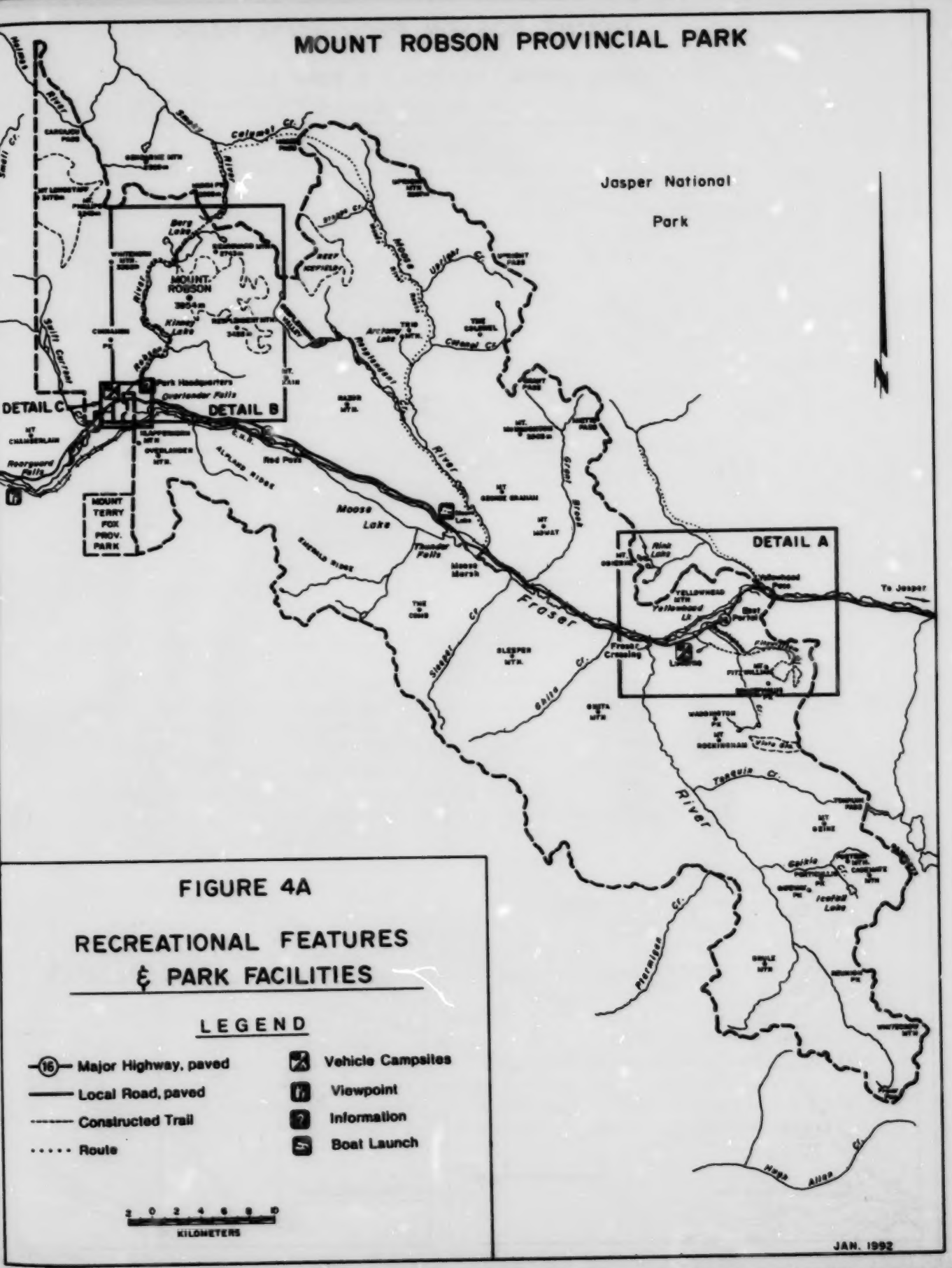
Mount Robson Park complements the wilderness recreation opportunities available in the larger adjacent complex of protected areas. It also ensures a quality experience which may not be available on the Crown lands outside the park, which are managed primarily for resource utilization.

Objective:

To manage recreational use of resources and special features for minimal impact so that activities are sustainable and the resources are protected.

Actions:

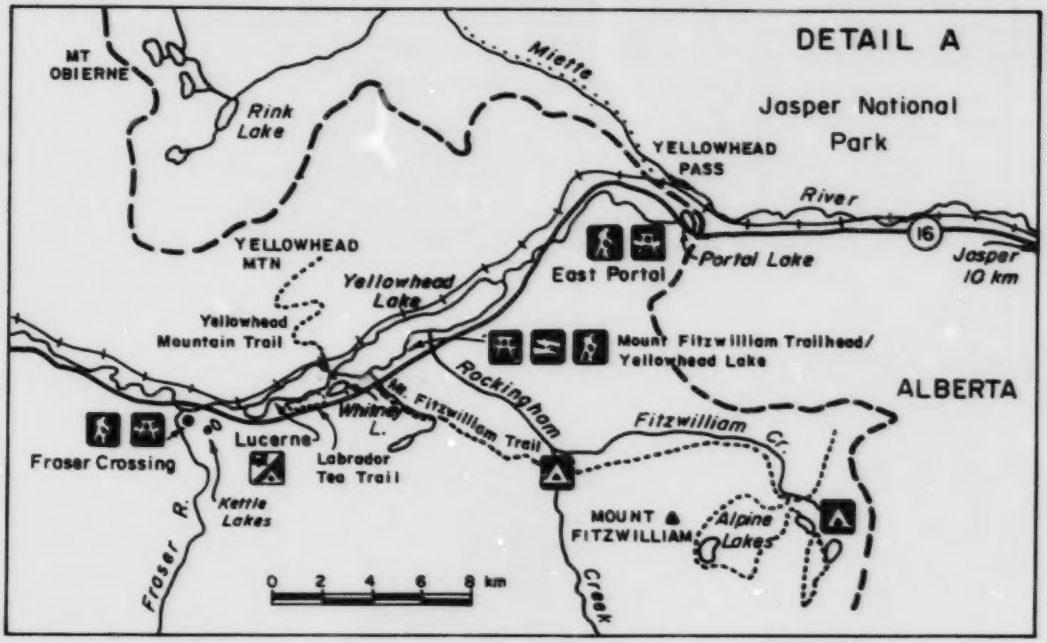
- Manage recreation use according to zoning - very low use of wilderness type in the Wilderness Conservation and Wilderness Recreation Zones; controlled use in the Natural Environment and Intensive Recreation Zones.
- Limit use of sensitive features such as alpine meadows.
- Assess carrying capacity of the Berg Lake Corridor and through a management plan, control recreation use accordingly.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting.
- Undertake environmental assessment for all future recreation development.


MOUNT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK
Jasper National Park
DETAIL A
DETAIL B
DETAIL C
MOUNT ROBSON
MOUNT TERRY FOX PROV. PARK
Moose Lake
Fraser River
Grand Trunk
Park Headquarters
Overlander Falls
Rearguard Falls
Thunder Falls
Moose Marsh
Fraser Crossing
Yellowhead Pass
Yellowhead Mtn
Mt Fitzwilliam
Mt Rockingham
Mt Ogilvie
Iceford Lake
Hugo Allan Cr.
To Jasper
N
FIGURE 4A
RECREATIONAL FEATURES & PARK FACILITIES
LEGEND
16 Major Highway, paved
Local Road, paved
Constructed Trail
Route
Vehicle Campsites
Viewpoint
Information
Boat Launch
2 0 2 4 6 8 10
KILOMETERS
JAN. 1992

MOUNT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK

RECREATIONAL FEATURES & PARK FACILITIES
DETAILED AREAS

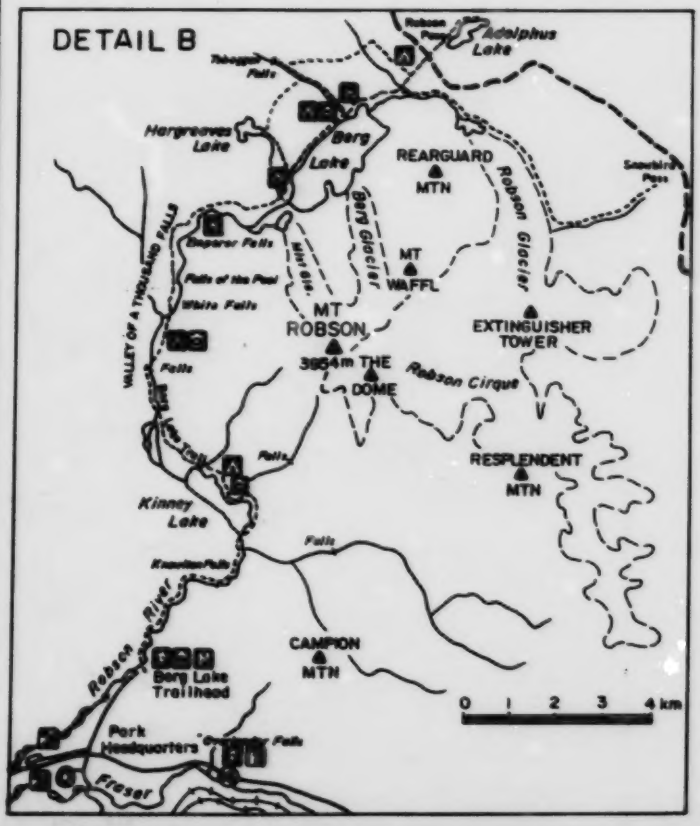
FIGURE 4B

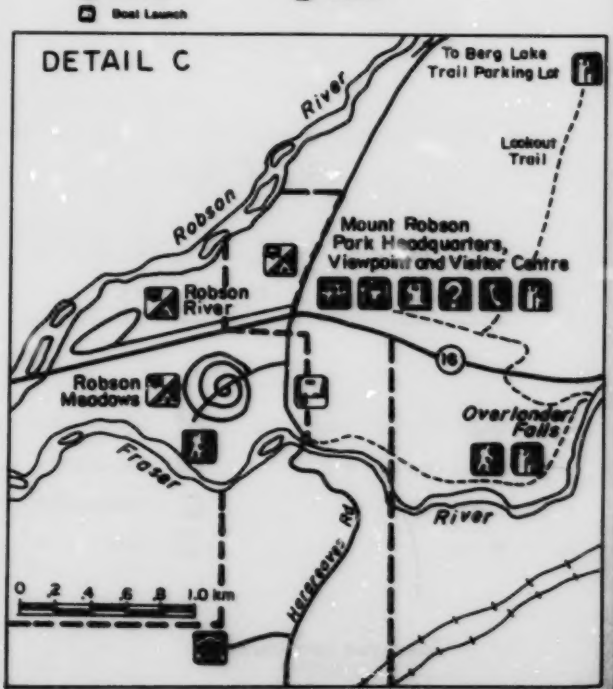


LEGEND

PARK BOUNDARY

- Major Highway, paved
- Local Road, paved
- Constructed Trail
- Route
- Viewpoint
- Hiking / Walking Trail
- Telephone
- Information
- Boat Launch
- Vehicle Campsites
- Tent Station
- Wilderness Campsites
- Cooking Shelter
- Picnicking
- Accommodation
- Restaurant
- Gasoline





JAN. 1982

Visitor Services

General Concept

To provide services to park visitors, BC Parks has four recreation system goals, as presented in Appendix A. Mount Robson Park meets all four of these goals and also offers distinctive world-class experiences readily associated with the park. These are discussed in the following sections.

Travel Route

Highway 16 enters British Columbia at Mount Robson Park from the internationally known national parks in Alberta, providing a prime travel link through the scenic Rocky Mountains.

The key experience associated with this goal is "Enjoying the Spectacular Rocky Mountains". Along the highway are beautiful lakes, spectacular mountain scenery, waterfalls, abundant wildlife and Mount Robson itself, all of which makes an outstanding park experience. A range of visitors from local travellers to international tourists enjoy the drive or cycle along the Travel Corridor and stop at viewpoints, picnic sites, interpretive stops and campgrounds. This experience can take as little as a couple of hours or as much as a couple of days.

Outdoor Recreation Holiday Destination

Along the highway are three campgrounds which supply a base for the highway travellers, particularly from British Columbia and Alberta, to explore the park.

"Camping at the Base of Robson" is the key experience associated with this goal. The park is well-suited for the extended weekend or the family vacation. Three park campgrounds and numerous private campsites meet most camping needs. The diverse day-use activities, from interpretive programs at the Visitor Centre to day hikes, keep visitors busy through their stay.

Backcountry Recreation

Just off the highway, the park has spectacular backcountry areas. From the world-renowned Berg Lake Trail to the remote Upper Fraser River, novice hikers and wilderness seekers can fulfil their backcountry expectations in the park.

Mount Robson Park offers three key experiences which fall under this goal. First, "Hiking the Berg Lake Trail" is an internationally popular backcountry experience for hikers. The spectacular vistas of waterfalls, forests, glaciers, mountains make this one of the outstanding hikes of the Rocky Mountains, attracting visitors regionally and internationally. Visitors generally take three to four days to enjoy this part of the park; however, some extend their stay to a week to explore the backcountry around Berg Lake.

Secondly, "Climbing the Monarch of the Rockies" rates as a world-class climb. Mt. Robson is sought by experienced climbers internationally. Depending on the route and the weather, this gruelling climb takes between four days to a week.

Thirdly, "Experiencing the Rocky Mountain Wilderness" offers mountains, alpine meadows and wildlife in the isolation of the Rocky Mountains. Wilderness seekers ranging from local residents to international travellers find undisturbed wilderness in the Moose River Valley, the Upper Fraser Valley and along Alpland and Emerald Ridges. These excursions into remote areas can extend past ten days.

Local Recreation

Mount Robson Park offers a number of day-use activities in a world-class setting that attract people from the neighbouring communities of Valemount, McBride and Jasper. These activities include swimming, boating, hiking, nature appreciation, picnicking and fishing.

Continuity of Experience

In delivering these world-class experiences, BC Parks will manage for continuity of experience. When the visitors receive information on the park, a certain expectation is set. That expectation will be met from the time the visitors enter the park until the time they leave again. This includes the pre-trip information, onsite information, access, parking, visitor facilities, appropriate trails for the activity, appropriate management of vegetation and wildlife along trails.

Plate 6: Horseback Riding

Access Strategy

The primary access to Mount Robson Park is Highway 16 which bisects the park from east to west, running through the Yellowhead Pass and along the Fraser River. Along this route are a number of viewpoints, interpretive stops, picnic sites and campgrounds.

This Travel Corridor also provides the main access to the backcountry. Numerous trails and routes leave the highway and lead into the interior of the park. Hikers can access to Mount Robson Park from Jasper National Park through Carcajou Creek and Smoky River Valley; both hikers and horse riders can gain access from Miette, Colonel and Tonquin Passes.

Future forestry roads in the Ptarmigan and Hugh Allen drainages in the south and existing roads in the Holmes River area in the north could have significant implications and impacts on the wilderness qualities of adjacent park areas. Controlling access from outside the park is essential to protect the integrity of the Wilderness Conservation and Wilderness Recreation Zones.

Access by helicopter is controlled through both zoning and permits. To land in a park, helicopters require a park use permit. They are not permitted to land in the Wilderness Conservation Zones. In the Wilderness Recreation Zones, helicopters can only land in specially designated areas described in a park use permit and that have been assessed for impact on wildlife and other park users. In the Berg Lake Natural Environment Zone, landings are restricted to the Robson Pass and flight paths, time and days of flight are prescribed.

Commercial float planes are not be permitted on Yellowhead Lake but are allowed on the west end of Moose Lake by permit only. If private float planes landings increase in frequency, BC Parks will work with the B.C. Aviation Council in controlling private float plane use to protect wildlife, recreation and environmental values.

Objectives:

To provide appropriate access to the backcountry without impacts to the environment, wildlife and users.

To control aircraft landings in the park.

Actions:

- Work with the Ministry of Forests to control access that may be created as a result of harvesting activities outside the park.
- Control helicopter landings through permits. Give full consideration to impacts on wildlife and other users in developing permit conditions.

- Continue to work with companies who fly over park to control noise and disruption to wildlife and park users.
- Control commercial float plane landings through permits.

Plate 7: Mount Robson reflected in the Robson River

Information Strategy

Mount Robson Park represents an exceptional opportunity for BC Parks to educate and inform both the visitors to British Columbia and the people of British Columbia. It is a World Heritage Site located on a transprovincial highway which offers an awesome view of the highest peak in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. In addition, the Visitor Centre is strategically located at this world-renowned viewpoint. Consequently, the park has the potential to play a key provincial role in welcoming visitors to the province, providing tourism information, and informing visitors about the BC Parks system, its conservation and recreation mandate.

Information can:

- create an awareness of the role of the park in achieving the goals of the provincial park system;
- promote an understanding of and appreciation for the natural and cultural resources of the park and the surrounding region;
- instill a sense of stewardship for the park and the park system;
- provide visitors with information that will enhance their use and enjoyment of the park's facilities and services;
- provide information on other provincial parks in British Columbia.

This information will be directed at highway travellers, backcountry hikers, day-users and holiday seekers. Highway travellers make up the bulk of visitors to the park, a large number of which are en route to other destinations. Of the visitors staying the day or longer, approximately half the number of visitors are Alberta residents. Most of the rest are from British Columbia and United States with a small but increasing number originating from Europe. Consequently, specific target groups include: incidental highway travellers; informed highway travellers; Alberta residents; and British Columbia residents.

The provision of information to park visitor, both inside and outside the park is approached through three means:

1) awareness and pre-trip planning,
2) orientation and information, and
3) natural and cultural heritage education.

These are discussed below.

Awareness and Pre-Trip Planning

Specific information on pre-trip planning and park awareness is available from most BC Parks offices at Mount Robson Park Headquarters, Prince George District, Northern B.C. Region and BC Parks Headquarters in Victoria. Printed brochures which describe park resources, facilities and trails are also available at BC Tourism Infocentres. The district office and the park's Visitor Centre have inhouse leaflets which have detailed information on specific areas and resources in the park. Private sector advertising also contributes to regional awareness and provides pre-trip planning information.

Mount Robson Park is not as well-known nationally or internationally as its sister national parks of Jasper and Banff; however, its special features such as the "Monarch of the Rockies" and the Berg Lake Trail have a global reputation. The other backcountry opportunities and the holiday destination aspect of the park are not well-known.

Objectives:

To provide information about Mount Robson Park for visitor awareness and pre-trip planning.

Actions:

- In the park awareness information, provide visitors with alternatives to the Berg Lake Corridor such as Mt. Fitzwilliam, and inform them about other camping opportunities.
- Coordinate information programs with Jasper National Park to provide clear regional information.
- Continue to send Mount Robson brochures to nearby tourism information centres in both British Columbia and Alberta.
- Encourage visitor use during low user period such as shoulder seasons and mid-week.
- Increase the profile of Mount Robson Park as a World Heritage Site through regional and provincial initiatives.

Orientation and Information

Park orientation and information are provided mainly through the Visitor Centre, onsite signs, and park brochures. Interpretive programs in summer can also supply this type of information and will be expanded.

The Visitor Centre plays a major important role in the dissemination of information on Mount Robson specifically and the BC Parks system generally. To take full advantage of its strategic and unique location, a well-researched program statement is needed to establish guidelines and criteria for the Centre, its displays and programs. In addition, the Visitor Centre could be redesigned to fully realize its potential in the provision of information and educational opportunities. Further development of displays, video programs, staff services and interpretive programs would also contribute to the role of the Visitor Centre.

Facilities and signs including information shelters, trail signs, and road-side signs can create a park identity. Interpretive and informational signs can provide important onsite educational and safety information.

Objectives:

To supply a large audience with information about the BC Parks system, Mount Robson Park, environmental stewardship and personal safety.

To furnish information about provincial and regional tourism opportunities.

Actions:

- Develop a well-researched program statement to establish guidelines and criteria for operating the Visitor Centre and its programs.
- Complete a Visitor Centre facility design.
- Complete the interpretive signing project at various viewpoints including the Mt. Robson Viewpoint and Overlander Falls.
- Provide interpretive signing on day-use trails.
- Develop a self-guiding interpretive trail at Moose Marsh to take advantage of the wildlife viewing opportunities while minimizing environmental impacts.
- Use information and safety signs sparingly in the Wilderness Recreation and Wilderness Conservation Zones.
- Continue to work with BC Tourism to provide regional and provincial tourism information.

Natural and Cultural Heritage Education

Mount Robson, in conjunction with the other protected areas in the Rocky Mountains, represents a tremendous wilderness area protecting the region's ecological diversity. The international significance of this area has been recognized through UNESCO's World Heritage Site designation.

The park has a role to play in heritage education and interpretation, informing visitors of the natural and cultural resources of both the park and the province. Through this, support and understanding for the mandate of BC Parks and management of the park can be cultivated. In addition, visitors are encouraged to develop a sense of stewardship for the park and the features it protects.

In addition to conservation and recreation, Mount Robson Park has unique themes that could be used in an education program. The major themes are:

i) Natural Heritage: regional landscapes (Northern Continental Ranges), active glaciation, plate tectonics, climate, zonation of alpine areas and the ecological diversity of the Canadian Rocky Mountains World Heritage Site.

ii) Cultural Heritage: the archaeological evidence, role in native culture, early explorers and tourists, railway history, the mountaineering exploits, Japanese work camps and the role of the Yellowhead Pass area as a travel route.

iii) Recreation: opportunities available in the park, outdoor safety, wilderness and conservation ethics, firewood conservation, bear safety, low impact park use, mountain bike and horse back etiquette and wildlife on the highway.

Objectives:

To provide a large audience education program.

To inform visitors of the BC Parks system, conservation and the World Heritage Site program.

Actions:

- Undertake an interpretation assessment for the park.
- Develop an interpretation and information plan.
- Prepare a display plan for the Visitor Centre to present natural and cultural features and recreation opportunities of Mount Robson, and introduce the World Heritage Site concept.

- Develop an extensive program of visitor contact and communication involving both personal services and self-explanatory material such as visitor programs, school programs, self-guided trails, special events, brochures and displays.
- Coordinate education and information programs with Jasper National Park.
- Use off-site signs and brochures to describe and interpret themes that are located in remote and sensitive areas, and the Wilderness Conservation and Wilderness Recreation Zones.

Plate 8: Interpreter in front of the Visitor Centre

Marketing and Promotion

Image

The image of Mount Robson Park results from its outstanding unique experiences which are based on its special features, its wilderness character and the accessibility of a backcountry experience. The Visitor Centre could play a larger role to strengthen this image. Schools programs and special events such as Parks Day and Trails Day help to increase the awareness of and garner support for the park and its role.

Objective:

To portray the significance of Mount Robson Park as a conservation area.

Actions:

- Develop Mount Robson's image as a significant conservation area and a World Heritage site through the Visitor Centre, school programs and special events.

Promotion

Promotion will be directed at the park's significance in conservation and at the holiday destination use of the park. Given the popularity of the Berg Lake Trail, it does not require promotion except to encourage shoulder season and mid-week visits.

BC Parks works with the tourism regions, North by Northwest and Highcountry, to inform the travelling public of the destination and day-use opportunities in the park. BC Tourism provides tourism information services in the Visitor Centre, complementing BC Parks' visitor programs.

Objectives:

To ensure consistent high quality standards are maintained in marketing Mount Robson Park.

To increase the holiday destination use of the park.

To promote backcountry opportunities in such a way as to decrease weekend pressure on the Berg Lake Trail.

To provide an awareness of backcountry opportunities at a level that is appropriate for the zoning and environmental sensitivity of the area.

Actions:

- Inform potential visitors of high levels of use on summer weekends and probability of hearing helicopters flying around Mt. Robson. Once a means of controlling numbers has been established through a management plan, inform visitors of the possibilities of having to delay their hike up the trail.
- Continue to use the services of the tourism regions to inform the travelling public of the destination and day-use opportunities in the park.
- Continue to support international promotion of the park.
- Direct promotion and marketing activities at the Alberta market in recognizing that the majority of visitors are from Alberta.
- Encourage BC Tourism to continue the services it provides in the Visitor Centre.
- Work with the local Chambers of Commerce in promoting and marketing the park.

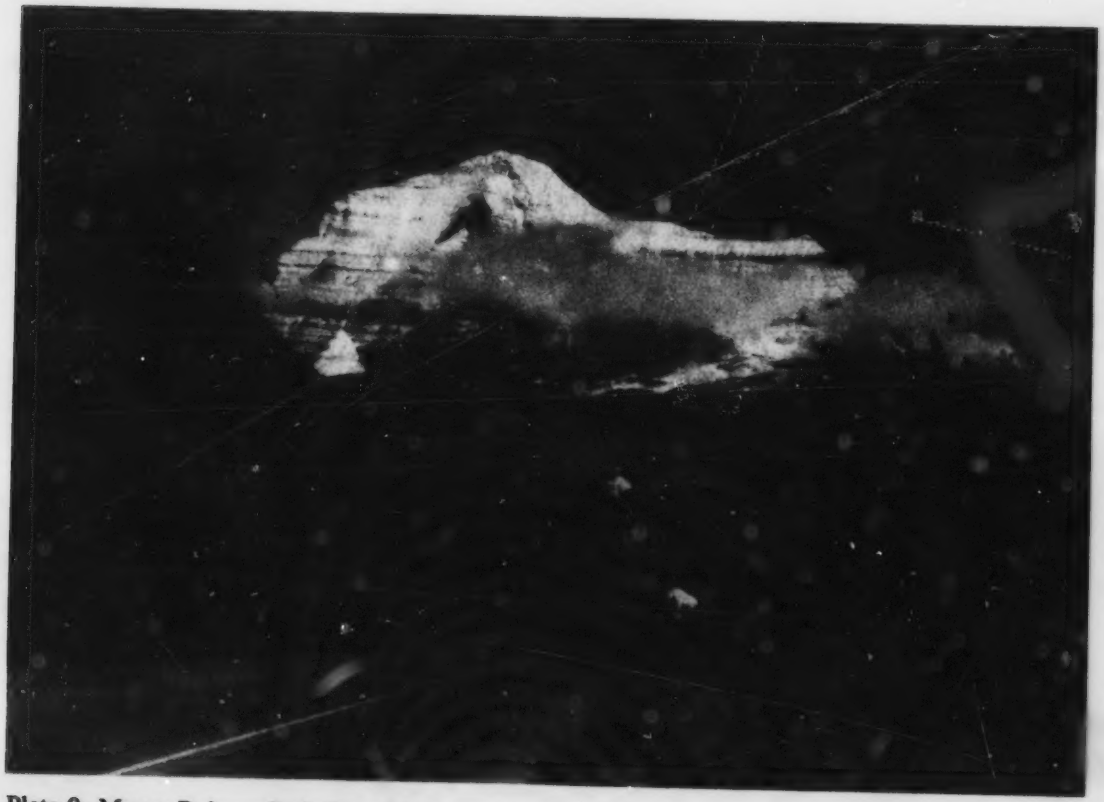


Plate 9: Mount Robson Park Entrance

Management Services

The park is administered by the Mount Robson Zone of the Prince George District and has its headquarters at the Mount Robson Visitor Centre. Staff ensure that various management responsibilities are carried out according to the Park Act and its Regulations and the established policy and procedures of the Ministry. This includes, but is not limited to: regulating public use to ensure safe and proper use of the park and its facilities; maintaining trails, cabins and other facilities; managing permits covering all commercial uses within the park; minimizing the impact of visitors, facilities and activities; collecting data on resources.

Objectives:

To carry out management responsibilities according to the guidelines of this Master Plan.

To maintain a BC Parks presence within Mount Robson Park to provide enforcement, resource management, interpretation and safety services.

Actions:

- Provide a seasonal backcountry ranger program for the high use areas, such as the Berg Lake Trail.
- Ensure year-round management presence in the park.

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Due to its outstanding natural resources, Mount Robson Park has a long history of recreation use and continues to be a popular destination. However, recreation use must occur at a level that is not detrimental to the resources. The following section sets objectives for the provision of acceptable recreation opportunities and describes actions to be undertaken to provide these activities and protect the environment.

See Appendix C for a discussion of the zoning and management of the park by geographical unit.

Angling

Recreational angling in Mount Robson Park and the Valemount area is limited due to the low productivity of the cold and silty lakes and streams. To provide more opportunities, Portal and Witney Lakes have been enhanced through stocking.

Objective:

To provide angling opportunities for park visitors without detriment to native fish populations.

Actions:

- Direct angling in Portal and Witney Lakes through information and better access.
- Permit stocking, fish enhancement and angling facilities in the Intensive Recreation Zone only.
- Investigate opportunities for natural stock enhancement in Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Leave all other waters in natural state to preserve aquatic biological system.

Backcountry Hiking

Mount Robson Park offers a variety of hiking, from short day hikes to backcountry trips to wilderness excursions that can lead into Alberta. Most of the backcountry use occurs on the Berg Lake Trail which may be over-used and not meeting the backcountry expectations of users.

Objective:

To develop a range of hiking opportunities within the Intensive Recreation, Natural Environment and Wilderness Recreation Zones which minimizes the impact on the environment and conflicts between users.

Actions:

- Develop a management plan for the Berg Lake Trail to include: assessment of carrying capacity, means of controlling numbers, specific trail and facility planning and development; day hike opportunities from Berg Lake; horse use on the trail; reservation system for the Robson Pass horse camp; fuel and firewood use.

- Develop primitive backcountry and support facilities on Moose River Route as needed and as appropriate for the Moose River Wilderness Recreation Zone.

- Continue to develop primitive backcountry facilities on the upper end of the Mt. Fitzwilliam Trail as appropriate for the wilderness recreation zoning.

- Pursue opportunities with Jasper National Park in the Yellowhead Mountain/Rink Lakes area.

- Investigate opportunities to provide access to Alpland and Emerald Ridge areas in the Emerald Wilderness Recreation Zone.

Boating

Boating opportunities include motor-boating, rafting, kayaking and canoeing. Limited motor-boating takes place on Moose Lake and on the east section of Yellowhead Lake. Rafting and kayaking occur on the Class IV - V waters of the Fraser River below Moose Lake and commercial rafting takes place below Hargreaves Road. Canoeing is a suitable activity in the protected waters of Yellowhead Lake and Moose Marsh and on the Upper Fraser from Yellowhead to Moose Lake. Care must be taken to ensure that the wildlife, particularly nesting waterfowl, using Moose Marsh are not disturbed.

Objective:

To provide boating activities consistent with the natural setting of the park.

Actions:

- Allow boating activities in the Travel Corridor Intensive Use Zone.
- Support canoeing and kayaking on Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Continue to permit commercial rafting use on the Fraser River below Hargreaves Road.
- Identify commercial canoeing and kayaking opportunities on Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Permit motor-boating on Moose Lake and the east section of Yellowhead Lake. Consider restrictions on horsepower and type of motor to protect wildlife and for public safety.
- Assess opportunities for floating, kayaking and canoeing upstream from Moose Marsh.
- Provide educational information regarding the importance of the Moose Marsh wetlands to prevent harassment of wildlife.

Frontcountry Camping

Mount Robson Park has three provincial park campgrounds which meet current needs. Often Lucerne campground receives more visitors than it can accommodate on weekends and holidays which may be due to its strategic location on the east side of the park and the lakeside setting. Private campgrounds to the west of the park are available to offset peak demands.

Objective:

To provide a camping destination.

Actions:

- Develop an information strategy to shift some use from Lucerne to Robson Meadows campground. Promotion and referrals from Jasper would be part of this strategy.
- Monitor campground use through satisfaction surveys, comments and user trends to determine future development.
- Allow frontcountry camping in the Travel Corridor Intensive Recreation Zone only.
- Develop campsites for people using tents and bicycles.
- Develop and inform campers of day-use activities and visitor services available.
- Coordinate and cooperate with private campgrounds.

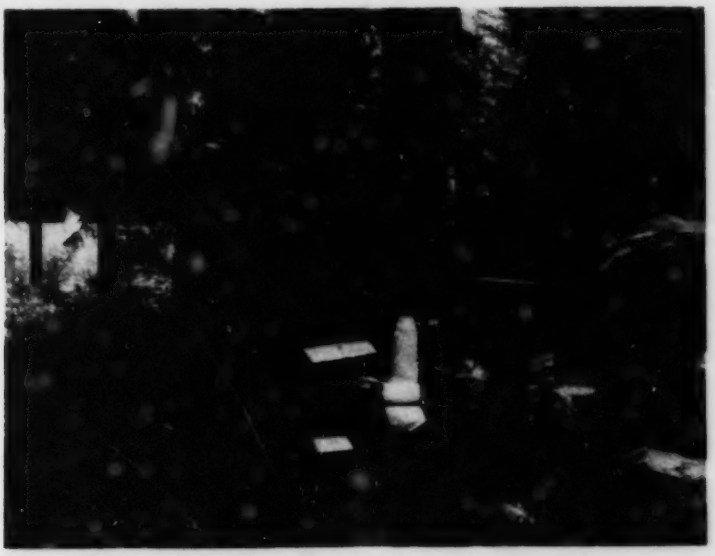


Plate 10: Camping in Robson Meadows Campground

Horse Use

Historically, horses have been an important means of travel through Mount Robson Provincial Park. However, conflicts with other users are occurring. In addition, care must be taken to not over use areas or damage the park's sensitive natural areas. Currently, only limited commercial horse use is permitted on the Berg Lake Trail with private and commercial traffic being directed to the Moose River Valley.

Objective:

To provide opportunities for horse use that have minimal impact on the environment or conflict with other users.

Actions:

- Keep horse use on the Berg Lake Trail to the existing permittees. Monitor and assess the ability of the trail to support horse use as part of the management plan. Set number of horse days and trail rest days to allow for both pedestrian and horse traffic and to protect the integrity of the trail. Upgrade and separate trail as necessary to limit impact in wet areas. Provide a corral at Robson Pass to be available for day use.

- Direct riders without permits (private parties and other commercial users) to Moose River Route. Keep level of use low until route can be assessed for its ability to support horse use in a wilderness setting. Develop primitive facilities as necessary to protect environment and in cooperation with local outfitters and the B.C. Horse Council.

- Regulate horse use as necessary to protect the environment and limit conflicts with other users, using criteria such as party size, camp facilities, timing. Trails may be closed during certain conditions (extended periods of rain, soft conditions after a late thaw) to prevent trail damage.

- Allow a low level of commercial and private horses use in other areas. The Resplendent Valley Wilderness Conservation Zone is closed to all horses and the Emerald Wilderness Recreation Zone is closed to commercial use.

Mountaineering

Mt. Robson and the Ramparts offer spectacular climbing opportunities. Mt. Robson is recognized as a classic climb among the mountaineering fraternity and attracts climbers world-wide.

Objective:

To continue to provide opportunities for challenging mountaineering.

Actions:

- Manage climbing on Mt. Robson in accordance with the wilderness recreation zoning.
- Develop a strategy to permit private and commercial climbing while promoting safety.

Plate 11: Mountaineering

Mountain Biking

Mountain biking has become a popular outdoor recreation activity. However, the trails in the park were built for pedestrians and horses and for the most part, are too steep, narrow or wet for bikes.

Objective:

To provide opportunities for mountain biking that have minimal impact on the environment or conflict with other users.

Actions:

- Designate the following as mountain bike routes: the Mt. Fitzwilliam Trail to the Rockingham Creek campsite; and the Berg Lake Trail to the Kinney Lake area, the exact location to be determined in the Berg Lake Corridor Management Plan. Close all other trails to mountain bike use.

- Develop mountain bike routes using existing roads and rights of way such as the Trans Mountain Pipeline right of way, historic roads and abandoned railway rights of way.

- Develop an education program in conjunction with the B.C. Bicycling Association and local groups through signs and provide information at the Visitor Centre to highlight trail etiquette.

- Establish a monitoring program and adjust use to reflect results, such as trail improvement, further restrictions on bike use.

Recreational Guiding

Commercial activities that are appropriate for Mount Robson Park include guided services for hiking, camping, canoeing, horse trips, river rafting, and helicopter trips. To maintain the integrity of the park and provide opportunities for both local operators and visitors, there must be limits on commercial guiding activities. The level of guiding in the different zones will depend upon the type of activity, the duration, timing, size of group and the area in which this activity occurs.

Objective:

To continue to allow recreational guiding where compatible with social and environmental carrying capacity.

Actions:

- Consider the social and environmental carrying capacity of the Wilderness Conservation and Wilderness Recreation Zones. Issue permits according to type, duration and frequency of activity, size of group, and sensitivity of area.
- Allow only the existing commercial horse permits in the Berg Lake Natural Environment Zone and establish permit conditions according to the Berg Lake Corridor Management Plan.
- Adjust levels of other recreational guiding in the Berg Lake Corridor according to the environmental carrying capacity.
- Identify all commercial guiding opportunities, evaluate the current provision, and if opportunities are available, issue permits for new activities through a competitive process.
- Require all commercial permit holders to develop a five year business plan that is compatible with this Master Plan to be updated and approved annually for their operations in the park.
- Permit commercial canoeing and kayaking on Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Continue to permit commercial rafting use on the Fraser River below Hargreaves Road.
- Work with recreational guides on west boundary to provide access to park resources for activities suitable for the Wilderness Recreation and Wilderness Conservation Zones.

Resource Appreciation

Mount Robson Park's outstanding natural and historical resources have remarkable appreciation, interpretation and education potential. Activities, such as self-guided hikes and interpretive programs, are popular and can build an appreciation for historical and natural features of the park. In addition, they complement the tourism industry of the region and further enhance visitor opportunities, which are important to the elderly, non-hiking and special needs visitors. Lastly, these activities promote stewardship and support for the park and its resources. The Visitor Centre can play a major role in providing information on these activities and directing use.

Objectives:

To encourage greater visitor appreciation of the park's natural and cultural heritage.

To expand the opportunities for day-use while minimizing environmental impact.

Actions:

- Develop interpretive programs and information materials explaining the park's natural and cultural resources.
- Complete an environmental review before undertaking any development.
- Develop and implement interpretive strategies for Kinney Lake, Berg Lake, Overlander and Rearguard Falls.
- Reassess wildlife viewing plan for Moose Lake and develop viewing opportunities.
- Develop historic interpretive opportunities in the park, specifically in east end of park including the Lucerne Townsite and the Roundhouse.
- Develop a nature study trail around the kettle lakes.
- Upgrade day-use trails, such as the Portal Lake, Labrador Tea and Fraser River Nature Trails.
- Investigate opportunities for the provision of day-use activities in west end of park, within the intent of the zoning.
- Complete the Viewpoint Trail to Campion Mountain.

Sightseeing

The Yellowhead Highway traverses the park, exposing the traveller to some outstanding features such as the magnificent mountain scenery, Moose Lake, Overlander Falls, Rearguard Falls, and the viewpoint of Mt. Robson. In addition, the park has a rich cultural heritage that is readily accessible from the highway. With 800,000 vehicles, 35,000 bus passengers and numerous cyclists passing through the park each year, sightseeing represents a significant portion of the visitor use.

Objective:

To provide a pleasant nature viewing experience while travelling through the park.

Actions:

- In conjunction with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, continue to provide a variety of road-side viewpoints as interpretive stops of interest, focusing on the park's resources and conservation mandate.
- Provide information both inside and outside of park on opportunities for viewing.
- Continue to provide information and interpretive programs on the park and the province to the travelling public at the Visitor Centre.
- Coordinate sightseeing opportunities and interpretive programs with Jasper National Park.

Plate 12: Wildlife along the Yellowhead Highway

Winter Recreation

Winter activities represents a small segment of recreational use in Mount Robson. With the rugged terrain and high avalanche hazards, opportunities are limited to cross-country skiing, backcountry skiing, heli-skiing and snowshoeing. Private cabins along the west side of the park serve the backcountry skiers.

An impact assessment has been completed for heli-skiing; the Mount Longstaff area may be able to support this activity without impacts to other user groups and wildlife. BC Parks allowed heli-skiing on a trial basis for a three-month period in the 1991-92 winter season to assess conflicts with wildlife or other users.

Objective:

To encourage safe, low impact winter recreation activities.

Actions:

- Provide information about opportunities and hazards for skiing and snowshoeing in the following areas: Kinney Lake, Swiftcurrent Creek and Alpland/Emerald Ridges.
- Keep park closed to snowmobiling.
- Complete an evaluation of the trial heli-skiing operation in the Mount Longstaff area, taking into account environmental impacts and user conflicts. Work with BC Environment and BC Lands to determine the impact inside and outside the park.
- Investigate opportunities to use utility rights of way for cross-country skiing.
- Permit commercial guided winter use such as backcountry skiing in low hazard areas.
- Recognize the private provision of huts on the west boundary of the park and cooperate with them to facilitate recreation use in the park.

Plan Implementation

Phase One

Listed in this section are both ongoing and new actions. The ongoing actions have been implemented prior to or during this planning process and will continue. The new actions will be undertaken in the near future.

Resource Management

Land

- Work with agencies to protect wildlife, recreation and aesthetic values along park boundaries and control access into wilderness areas.
- Study possible additions to park.

Inholdings

- Phase out private cabins and rehabilitate sites to natural state.
- Continue to work with utility and transportation agencies to minimize visual and environmental impacts.
- Continue to require permit holders to remove unnatural objects.
- Investigate opportunities to consolidate non-conforming facilities.
- Permit non-conforming facilities that benefit the people of British Columbia.
- Maintain rights of way as parkland for recreational opportunities.

Water

- Discourage water impoundments, diversions and future domestic use projects within the park.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Develop spill continency plans.

Vegetation

- Protect sensitive or unique vegetation communities from adverse impacts of recreational uses.
- Maintain close contact with the Ministry of Forests and industry in the review of the forest development plans outside the park.
- Prepare a fire management strategy.
- Develop a control program for disease and insect outbreaks.
- Develop a Travel Corridor vegetation management plan.
- Work with the Canadian Park Service in developing a consistent vegetation management plan.

Wildlife

- Consider wildlife habitat enhancement measures only in the Natural Environment and Intensive Recreation Zones.
- Retain trees and snags for wildlife habitat.
- Cooperate and establish common wildlife management objectives with Jasper National Park and BC Environment.
- Prepare an environmental assessment of any future recreational development.
- Protect the park's limited wetlands.
- Maintain a hunting closure in the park.
- Continue to implement recommendations from the bear hazard assessment.
- Develop a Travel Corridor wildlife management plan.
- Develop wildlife viewing opportunities at Moose Marsh.

Fish

- Encourage fishing in the Intensive Recreation Zone only.
- Maintain all alpine lakes in a natural state.

- Monitor along effort in Portal and Witney Lakes and continue enhancement measures and restrictions as required.
- Assess potential fishery enhancement through natural production in Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Enhance fish viewing opportunities at Rearguard Falls.

Cultural Resources

- Undertake a heritage impact assessment prior to any development.
- Inventory and assess cultural resources.
- Establish direct contact with the Shuswap and the Carrier-Sekani native people.

Visual Resources

- Manage the Travel Corridor in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Work with other agencies to minimize visual impacts of activities both inside and outside the park, particularly where scenic values are considered important.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting.
- Continue to provide and manage a variety of road-side interpretive viewpoints.

Outdoor Recreation Features

- Manage recreation use according to zoning.
- Limit use of sensitive features.
- Locate and design all park facilities in harmony with the visual setting.
- Undertake environmental assessment for all future recreation development.
- Assess carrying capacity of the Berg Lake Corridor and through a management plan, control recreation use accordingly.

Visitors Services

Access Strategy

- Work with the Ministry of Forests to control access outside the park.
- Control helicopter landings through permits.
- Continue to work with charter airline companies to control noise and disruptions.
- Control commercial float plane landings through permits.

Information Strategy

Awareness and Pre-trip Planning

- Increase the profile of Mount Robson Park as a World Heritage Site.
- Inform visitors about hiking and camping opportunities other than Berg Lake.
- Continue to send brochures to nearby tourism information centres.
- Encourage visitor use during low user periods.

Orientation and Information

- Use information and safety sighs sparingly in the Wilderness Recreation and Wilderness conservation Zones.
- Provide interpretive signing on day-use trails.
- Complete a Visitor Centre plan.
- Develop a well-researched program statement for Visitor Centre.
- Complete interpretive signing project at various viewpoints.
- Develop a self-guiding interpretive trail/platform at Moose Marsh.

Natural and Cultural Heritage Education

- Undertake an interpretive assessment for the park.
- Develop an interpretation and information plan.

- Develop an extensive program of visitor contract and communication.
- Use off-site signs and brochures to describe and interpret themes that are located in remote and sensitive areas.

Marketing and Promotion

Image

- Develop Mount Robson's image as significant conservation area and a World Heritage site.

Promotion

- Continue to use the services of the tourism regions.
- Continue to support the international promotion of the park.
- Direct promotion and marketing activities at the Alberta market.
- Encourage BC Tourism to continue its services in the Visitor Centre.
- Work with the local Chambers of Commerce in promoting and marketing the park.
- Inform potential visitors of high levels of use on the Berg Lake Trail on summer weekends and probability of hearing helicopters.

Management Services

- Provide a seasonal backcountry ranger program for the high use areas.
- Ensure year-round management presence in the park.

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Angling

- Permit stocking, fish enhancement and angling facilities in the Intensive Recreation zone only.
- Leave all other waters in natural state.
- Direct angling in Portal and Witney Lakes.

- Investigate opportunities for natural stock enhancement in Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.

Backcountry Hiking

- Develop and management plan for the Berg Lake Corridor.
- Continue to develop primitive backcountry facilities on the upper end of the Mt. Fitzwilliam Trail.

Boating

- Allow boating activities only in the Travel Corridor Intensive Recreation Zone.
- Support canoeing and kayaking on Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Continue to permit commercial rafting use on the Fraser River below Hargreaves Road.
- Provide educational information on the Moose Marsh wetlands.
- Identify commercial canoeing and kayaking opportunities on Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Permit motor-boating on Moose Lake and the east section of Yellowhead Lake. Consider restrictions on horsepower and type of motor to protect wildlife and for public safety.

Frontcountry Camping

- Allow frontcountry camping in the Travel Corridor Intensive Recreation Zone only.
- Develop an information strategy to shift some use from Lucerne to Robson Meadows campground.
- Monitor campground use to determine future development.
- Develop and inform campers of day-use activities and visitor services available.
- Coordinate and cooperate with private campgrounds and Jasper National Park.

Horse Use

- Regulate horse use as necessary to protect the environment and limit conflicts with other users.
- Consider trail closures during certain conditions to prevent trail damage.
- Keep horse use on the Berg Lake Corridor to the existing permittees.
- Direct riders without permits (private parties and other commercial users) to Moose River Route.
- Monitor and assess the ability of the Berg Lake Trail to support horse use.
- Provide a day-use corral at Robson Pass.
- Close the Resplendent Valley Wilderness Conservation Zone to all horses and the Emerald Wilderness Recreation Zone to commercial use.
- Allow a low level of commercial and private horse use in other areas.

Mountaineering

- Manage climbing on Mt. Robson in accordance with the wilderness recreation zoning.
- Develop a strategy to safely permit private and commercial climbing.

Mountain Biking

- Designate the following as mountain bike routes: the Mt. Fitzwilliam Trail to the Rockingham Creek campsite; and the Berg Lake Trail to the Kinney Lake area.
- Close all other trails to mountain bike use.
- Establish a monitoring program and adjust use to reflect results.

Recreational Guiding

- Issue permits according to the social and environmental carrying capacity.
- Allow only the existing commercial horse permits in the Berg Lake Natural Environment Zone and establish permit conditions according to the Berg Lake Corridor Management Plan.

- Adjust levels of other recreational guiding in the Berg Lake Corridor according to environmental carrying capacity.
- Require all commercial permit holders to develop a five year business plan.
- Permit commercial canoeing and kayaking on Moose and Yellowhead Lakes.
- Continue to permit commercial rafting use on the Fraser River below Hargreaves Road.
- Work with recreational guides on west boundary to provide suitable access to park.

Resource Appreciation

- Develop interpretive programs and information materials.
- Assess wildlife viewing plan for Moose Lake and develop viewing opportunities.
- Develop and implement interpretive strategies for Kinney Lake, Berg Lake, Overlander and Rearguard Falls.
- Upgrade day-use trails.
- Investigate opportunities for the provision of appropriate day-use activities in west end of park.
- Complete the Lookout Trail to Campion Mountain.
- Complete an environmental review before undertaking any development.

Sightseeing

- Continue to provide a variety of road-side viewpoints as interpretive stops.
- Provide information both inside and outside of park on opportunities for viewing.
- Continue to provide information and interpretive programs on the park and the province.

Winter Recreation

- Permit low impact commercial guided winter use.

- Provide information about opportunities and hazards for skiing and snowshoeing.
- Keep park closed to snowmobiling.
- Complete an evaluation of the trial heli-skiing operation in the Mount Longstaff area.
- Cooperate with commercial huts outside the park to facilitate recreational use in the park.

Phase Two

Resource Management

Land

- Investigate opportunities to change the boundaries of the Mount Terry Fox Provincial Park to follow natural features.

Inholdings

- Eliminate the trapline park use permit.

Vegetation

- Develop a long-term vegetation management strategy.

Wildlife

- Develop a long-term management plan for wildlife in the park.
- Acquire the existing trapline territory.
- Investigate opportunities with other park agencies to manage for carnivore populations.

Cultural Resources

- Develop appropriate management strategies for identified heritage sites.
- Work with Jasper National Park to develop educational themes along Highway 16.
- Develop heritage education programs.

Visual Resources

- Work with Jasper National Park to create and coordinate a Rocky Mountain park highway experience.

Visitor Services

Information Strategy

Awareness and Pre-trip Planning

- Coordinate information programs with Jasper National Park.

Natural and Cultural Heritage Education

- Coordinate education and information programs with Jasper National Park.
- Prepare a display plan for the Visitor Centre.

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Backcountry Hiking

- Develop primitive backcountry and support facilities on Moose River Route as needed and as appropriate.
- Pursue opportunities with Jasper National Park in the Yellowhead Mountain/Rink Lakes area.
- Investigate opportunities to provide access to Alpland and Emerald Ridge areas.

Frontcountry Camping

- Develop campsites for people using tents and bicycles.

Horse Use

- Upgrade and separate the Berg Lake Trail as necessary to limit impact in wet areas.
- Assess Moose River Route for its ability to support horse use in a wilderness setting.
- Develop primitive facilities on the Moose River Route as necessary.

Mountain Biking

- Develop mountain bike routes using existing roads and rights of way.
- Develop an education program in conjunction with the B.C. Bicycling Association and local groups.

Recreational Guiding

- Identify and evaluate commercial guiding opportunities, and if new opportunities are available, issue permits through a competitive process.

Resource Appreciation

- Develop historic interpretive opportunities in the park.
- Develop a nature study trail around the kettle lakes.

Sightseeing

- Coordinate sightseeing opportunities and interpretive programs with Jasper National Park.

Winter Recreation

- Investigate opportunities to use utility rights of way for cross-country skiing.

Mount Robson Provincial Park

MASTER PLAN

Appendix A
BC Parks System Goals

BC Parks

BC Parks System Goals

In the Park Act, BC Parks must:

- conserve significant and representative natural and cultural resources, and
- provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Conservation

Within the conservation mandate, BC Parks has two goals:

Goal 1 Protection of Representative Landscapes - To conserve British Columbia's natural diversity by protecting viable, representative examples of our different landscapes.

Goal 2 Protection of Special Features - To protect British Columbia's key natural and cultural features, including outstanding examples of our wildlife, old growth forests, waterfalls and cultural artifacts.

Recreation

Within the recreation mandate, BC Parks has four goals:

Goal 1 Tourism Travel Routes - To provide park attractions and services which enhance tourism travel routes.

Goal 2 Outdoor Recreation Holiday Destinations - To provide park attractions which serve as or improve key destinations for outdoor recreation holidays.

Goal 3 Backcountry - To provide outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities throughout the province. Some sites may feature adventure tourism, while in other areas the wilderness would remain untouched.

Goal 4 Local Recreation - To ensure access to local outdoor recreation opportunities for all residents of this province.

Mount Robson Provincial Park

MASTER PLAN

Appendix B
BC Parks Zoning

	Intensive Recreation	Natural Environment
OBJECTIVE	To provide for a variety of readily accessible, facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.	To protect scenic values and to provide for backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.
USE LEVEL	Relatively high density and long duration types of use.	Relatively low use but higher levels in association with nodes of activity or access.
MEANS OF ACCESS	All-weather public roads or other types of access where use levels are high (see "Impacts" below).	Mechanized (power-boats, snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles), non-mechanized (foot, horse, canoe, bicycle). Aircraft and motorboat access to drop-off and pickup points will be permitted.
LOCATION	Contiguous with all-weather roads and covering immediate areas, modified landscapes or other high-use areas.	Removed from all-weather roads but easily accessible on a day-use basis. Accessible by mechanized means such as boat or plane.
SIZE OF ZONE	Small; usually less than 2,000 ha.	Can range from small to large.
BOUNDARY DEFINITION	Includes areas of high facility development in concentrated areas.	Boundaries should consider limits of activity/facility areas relative to ecosystem characteristics and features.
RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES	Vehicle camping, picnicking, beach activities, power-boating, canoeing, kayaking, strolling, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, snowplay, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, specialized activities.	Walk-in/boat-in camping, power-boating, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, historic and nature appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, river rafting, horseback riding, heli-skiing, heli-hiking, and specialized activities.

Special Feature	Wilderness Recreation	Wilderness Conservation
To protect and present significant natural or cultural resources, features or processes because of their special character, fragility and heritage values.	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where air access may be permitted to designated sites.	To protect a remote, undisturbed natural landscape and to provide unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities dependent on a pristine environment where no motorized activities will be allowed.
Generally low.	Very low use, to provide solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere. Use may be controlled to protect the environment.	Very low use, to provide solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere. Use may be controlled to protect the environment.
Various; may require special access permit.	Non-mechanized; except may permit low frequency air access to designated sites; foot, canoe (horses may be permitted).	Non-mechanized (no air access); foot, canoe (horses may be permitted).
Determined by location of special resources; may be surrounded by or next to any of the other zones.	Remote; generally not visited on a day-use basis.	Remote; not easily visited on a day-use basis.
Small; usually less to 2000 hectares.	Large; greater than 5,000 ha.	Large; greater than 5,000 ha.
Area defined by biophysical characteristics or the nature and extent of cultural resources (adequate to afford protection).	Defined by ecosystem limits and geographic features. Boundaries will encompass areas of visitor interest for specific activities supported by air access. Will be designated under the Park Act.	Defined by ecosystem limits and geographic features. Will be designated under the Park Act.
Sight-seeing, historic and nature appreciation. May be subject to temporary closures or permanently restricted access.	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialized activities (eg. caving, climbing).	Backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, nature and historic appreciation, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, specialized activities (eg. caving, climbing).

	Intensive Recreation	Natural Environment
FACILITIES	May be intensely developed for user convenience. Campgrounds, landscaped picnic/play areas, trail, accommodation or interpretive buildings, boat launches; administrative buildings, service campgrounds, gravel pits, disposal sites, wood lots, parking lots, etc.	Moderately developed for user convenience. Trails, walk-in/boat-in campsites, shelters; accommodation buildings may be permitted; facilities for motorized access eg. docks, landing strips, fuel storage, etc.
IMPACTS ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	Includes natural resource features and phenomena in a primarily natural state but where human presence may be readily visible both through the existence of recreation facilities and of people using the zone. Includes areas of high facility development with significant impact on concentrated areas.	Area where human presence on the land is not normally visible, facility development limited to relatively small areas. Facilities are visually compatible with natural setting.
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES	Oriented toward maintaining a high quality recreation experience. Intensive management of resource and/or control of visitor activities. Operational facilities designed for efficient operation while remaining unobtrusive to the park visitor.	Oriented to maintaining a natural environment and to providing a high quality recreation experience. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience or to limit impacts. Separation of less compatible recreational activities and transportation modes Designation of transportation may be necessary to avoid potential conflicts (eg. horse trails, cycle paths, hiking trails).
EXAMPLES OF ZONING	Campground in Rathtrevor Beach Park; Gibson Pass ski areas in E.C. Manning Park.	Core area in Cathedral Park; North beach in Naikoon Park.

Special Feature	Wilderness Recreation	Wilderness Conservation
Interpretive facilities only, resources are to be protected.	Minimal facility development. Limited development for user convenience and safety, and protection of the environment eg. trails, primitive campsites, etc. Some basic facilities at access nodes, eg. dock, primitive shelter, etc.	None.
None; resources to be maintained unimpaired.	Natural area generally free of evidence of modern human beings. Evidence of human presence is confined to specific facility sites. Facilities are visually compatible with natural setting.	Natural area generally free of evidence of modern human beings.
High level of management protection with ongoing monitoring. Oriented to maintaining resources and, where appropriate, a high quality recreational and interpretive experience. Active or passive management depending on size, location, and nature of the resource. Visitor access may be restricted to preserve the recreation experience and to limit impacts.	Oriented to protecting a pristine environment. Management actions are minimal and not evident. Managed to ensure low visitor use levels. Visitor access may be restricted to protect the natural environment and visitor experience.	Oriented to protecting a pristine environment. Management actions are minimal and not evident. Managed to ensure low visitor use levels. Visitor access may be restricted to protect the natural environment and visitor experience.
Tidepools in Botanical Beach Park; Sunshine Meadows in Mount Assiniboine Park.	Quanchus Mountains Wilderness in Tweedsmuir Park; Wilderness Zone in Spatsizi Park.	Central Valhallas Wilderness in Valhalla Park; Garibaldi Park Nature Conservancy area.

Mount Robson Provincial Park

MASTER PLAN

Appendix C
Management Units

BC Parks

Management Units

This appendix provides a description of the management directions for natural and cultural resources and visitor services based on geographical units. For this purpose, Mount Robson Park is divided into five units: Upper Fraser, Moose River, Emerald, Berg Lake and Travel Corridor (Figure 5).

Upper Fraser Unit

This unit is the most southerly part of the park, located south of Highway 16 adjacent to Jasper National Park. This area is zoned primarily Wilderness Conservation but includes a small Wilderness Recreation Zone. Conservation and wilderness protection is of primary importance in this area. It protects the headwaters of the Fraser River, the Ramparts and a remote pristine area.

Wilderness Conservation Zone

The Upper Fraser Wilderness Conservation Zone makes up the bulk of this area, including the headwaters of the Fraser River, Tonquin Creek, and the Ramparts. This zone encompasses some of the most inaccessible parts of the park where conservation of the natural resources and features in a wilderness state are the most important management objective.

In this zone, natural processes will take place; fires and insect outbreaks only be managed to protect adjacent commercial forests on the southern boundaries. We will work with the Canadian Park Service in developing a consistent vegetation management strategy for the wilderness zones. Steps may be taken to restore the natural ecological diversity after years of fire suppression, but no management actions will be directed at enhancing wildlife and fish populations. Trapping will be phased out of this area.

Only low levels of unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities such as wilderness hiking and horse use will occur. In keeping with the wilderness setting, motorized vehicular access will not be permitted. Limited recreational guiding will be permitted, after careful consideration of the impact on the environment and wilderness characteristics of the area.

We will work with the Ministry of Forests, industry and other government agencies to protect wildlife, recreation and aesthetic values along the park boundary and to control access into this area.

Wilderness Recreation Zone

The Fitzwilliam Wilderness Recreation Zone is included in this unit. Maintaining the wilderness characteristics of this area is primary. It will be managed consistently with the larger adjacent Wilderness Conservation Zone; however, some rustic facilities may be provided to ensure a wilderness recreation experience and protect the environment, particularly in the sensitive high elevation environments. Commercial guiding opportunities will be limited.

Moose River Unit

This unit includes the most northeasterly part of the park north of Highway 16. The total unit is adjacent to Jasper National Park and management will be compatible. Conservation and wilderness protection are the focus in this area. It protects the Moose River, Resplendent Creek, Arctomys Lake, and the mountains passes of Miette and Colonel. It is zoned Wilderness Conservation and Wilderness Recreation.

Wilderness Conservation Zone

This zone covers the Resplendent, Mt. McNaughton and Upright Creek areas. Conservation of the natural resources and features in a wilderness setting are foremost in the management of this area.

In this zone, natural processes will predominant. In conjunction with the Canadian Park Service, we will develop a vegetation management strategy for the wilderness zones. Steps may be taken to restore the natural ecological diversity after years of fire suppression but no management actions will be directed at enhancing wildlife and fish populations.

Unassisted backcountry recreation opportunities such as wilderness hiking and climbing will be allowed. In keeping with the wilderness setting, motorized vehicular access will not be permitted. Horse use will occur at very low levels except for the Resplendent Wilderness Conservation Zone which is closed to horse use due to its sensitive high elevation communities. To protect the environment and ensure the quality of the experience, only low levels of recreational guiding will be permitted.

Wilderness Recreation Zones

The Moose River Route and the Yellowhead Mountain areas are zoned Wilderness Recreation to provide wilderness recreation. The Moose River Route which is a historic horse trail into Jasper, has been designated a horse route. Through the provision of primitive facilities such as bear poles and rustic campsites, we can reduce the recreational impacts and preserve the environmental and wilderness integrity of this rugged route.

The Yellowhead Mountain area is zoned Wilderness Recreation to develop a wilderness backcountry opportunity to the Rink Lakes in Jasper National Park.

In these areas, most natural processes will be allowed to occur uncontrolled. Natural fires may be controlled where park visitors are at risk. Enhancement activities will not be considered. Motorized vehicles and mountain bikes will not be permitted except for limited helicopter landings issued through a park use permit. Recreation guiding can take place with due consideration of the impacts on the environment and other users.

Emerald Unit

This unit includes the west portion of the park south of Highway 16 and includes Mount Terry Fox Provincial Park and Alpland and Emerald Ridges. This whole unit has been zoned Wilderness Recreation in recognition of its backcountry recreation opportunities and its wilderness qualities.

Natural processes will be allowed to occur; fires and insect and disease outbreaks that threaten adjacent commercial forests will be controlled. Enhancement activities will not be considered.

Motorized vehicles will not be permitted except for limited helicopter landings through a park use permit which will dictate locations and frequency of these landings. Helicopter landings will be permitted in Mount Terry Fox Park to view the monument. Heli-hiking landings will be encourage outside the park with clients accessing the area by foot. Recreation guiding can take place with due consideration of the impacts on the environment and other users. Due to the sensitive alpine vegetation, no mountain biking and commercial horse use will be considered in this area.

Berg Lake Unit

This unit includes the west portion of the park north of Highway 16 and covers the Berg Lake Corridor, Mt. Robson, Whitehorn Mountain, Mt. Longstaff and portions of the Swiftcurrent Creek. It is the focus of the backcountry recreation, with visitors hiking and riding to Berg Lake and mountaineers climbing Mt. Robson. This unit has been zoned Wilderness Conservation, Wilderness Recreation and Natural Environment.

Wilderness Conservation Zone

This Wilderness Conservation Zone is based around Whitehorn Mountain, an area that is inaccessible except by the hardiest. Management of the natural resources will be the same as the other Wilderness Conservation Zones. In terms of recreation opportunities, there will be no motorized vehicle access and limited recreational guiding.

Wilderness Recreation Zones

Both Mt. Robson and Mt. Longstaff have been zoned Wilderness Recreation. For Mt. Robson, this zoning allows for support of climbers tackling this world-class mountain. Helicopter support will be restricted to specific landing sites, flight paths, and frequency of landings.

On Mt. Longstaff, there is an opportunity for heli-supported skiing on the glacier. Number and location of helicopter landings will be stringently controlled by permit. Resource management will be much the same as the other wilderness recreation zones and recreation management.

We will work with the Ministry of Forests to plan land use outside park to protect conservation, recreation, and aesthetic values adjacent to the park.

Natural Environment Zone

The Berg Lake Corridor has been zoned Natural Environment to reflect the backcountry use of the area and allow for management of this use in order to protect the experience and the park resources. The Swiftcurrent Creek areas has also been zoned Natural Environment due to the road access and facilities that exist there.

Steps may be taken to preserve the aesthetics along the trail. Fires will be controlled to protect human lives, facilities and adjacent commercial forests. Fish enhancement will not be considered for this area.

The Berg Lake Corridor is primarily a hiking trail. Horse access will be limited to the existing permits and mountain bikes will be allowed as far as the Kinney Lake area. Helicopter landings will be restricted to Robson Pass. We will work with the commercial operators to control flight paths, frequency of flights and time and days of flights.

Given the popularity of this trail, a management plan will be prepared to address the details in managing horse use, mountain bike traffic, helicopter landings, commercial use and provision of facilities and information.

The Swiftcurrent Creek Natural Environment Zone will be managed will be managed to provide backcountry recreation and to maintain scenic qualities while benefiting wildlife.

Travel Corridor Unit

This unit is the hub of activity along Highway 16 which crosses the park from Yellowhead Pass to the west boundary. It includes Moose, Yellowhead, Portal and Witney Lakes, the Mt. Robson Viewpoint, the campgrounds, the view from the Travel Corridor and Rearguard Falls Park. This unit has been zoned both Natural Environment and Intensive Recreation.

Natural Environment Zone

The view from the highway has been zoned Natural Environment to provide a buffer between the Intensive Recreation and Wilderness Conservation Zones and to protect scenic qualities.

A Travel Corridor vegetation management plan will be prepared to protect the wildlife, ecological diversity and scenic qualities of this area. Fires, disease and insect outbreaks may be controlled to protect the view from the highway. Wildlife habitat enhancement will be considered to reduce wildlife mortalities on the highway and railway, particularly in winter. Sensitive natural and cultural features will identified and protected.

Facility development will be limited to day-use trails. A heritage education program will be developed to reflect the rich natural and cultural history of this area. Limited helicopter landings will be permitted in the Alpland Ridge area. Mountain bikes will be allowed as far as Rockingham Creek campsite on the Fitzwilliam Trail.

Intensive Recreation Zone

The highway has been zoned Intensive Recreation to provide readily accessible and facility oriented outdoor recreation opportunities such as campgrounds, picnic areas and play grounds.

Habitat enhancement will be undertaken to reduce road and rail-related wildlife mortalities. Fish enhancement will continue in Portal and Witney Lakes as required and natural stock enhancement will be investigated for Yellowhead and Moose Lakes. Wildlife viewing opportunities will be developed in Moose Marsh with full consideration for environmental impacts and wildlife disruption. Sensitive natural and cultural features will be protected.

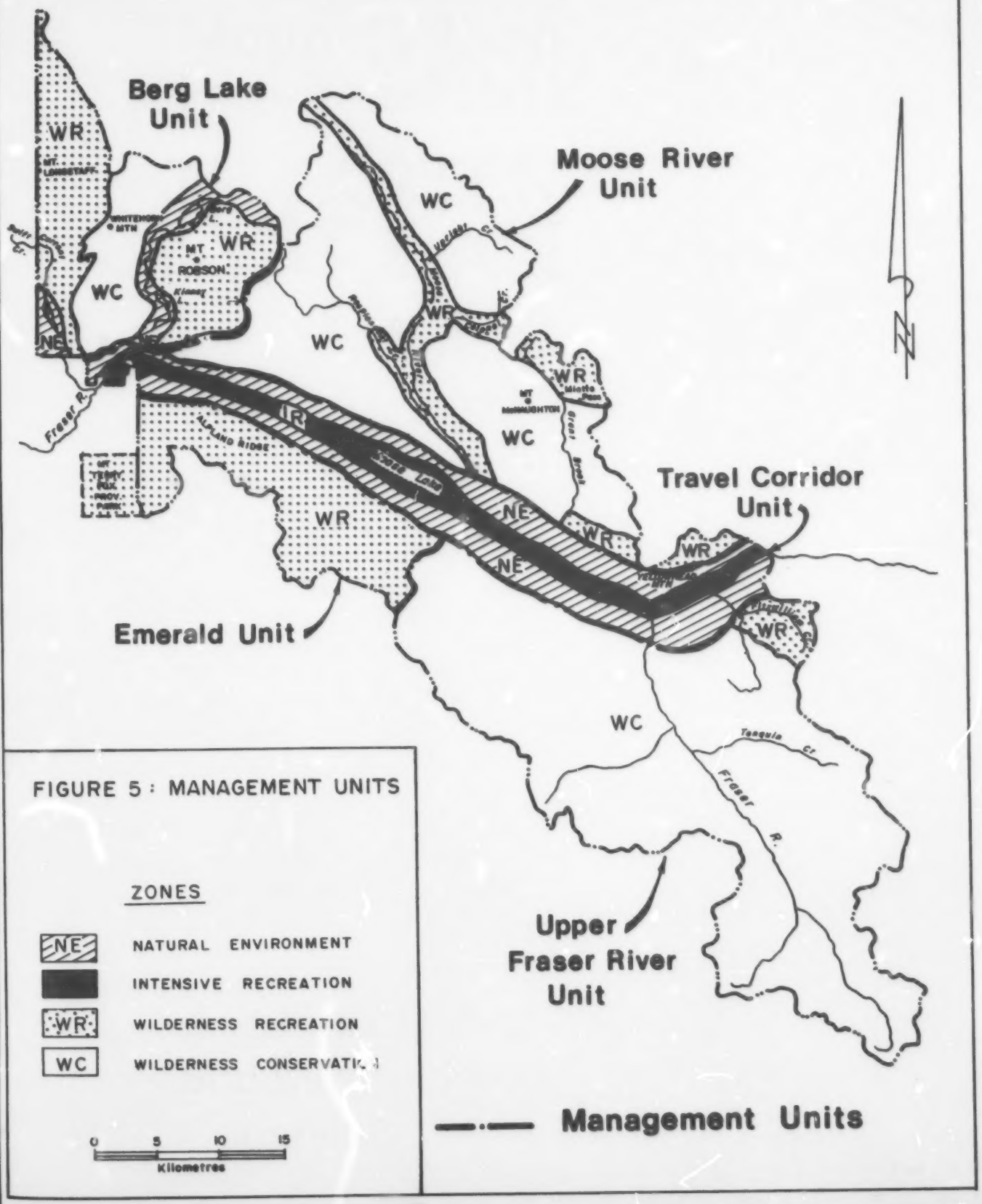
We will work with the Ministry of Forests and industry to protect views of Mt. Robson from Highway 16, west of the park.

Development will occurs only at existing areas and with an impact assessment. Campsites will be provided for tents and cyclists. We will work with the private sector and Jasper National Park to determine future campground development. Day-use opportunities, such as mountain bike and cross country trails and nature and historic trails, will be developed and existing day-use trails will be upgraded. We will work with Ministry of Transportation and Highways to provide a variety of roadside viewpoints. An interpretive strategy will be developed for Overlander and Rearguard Falls and historical sites such as Lucerne Townsite, Summit City and the Roundhouse.

Under permit, float planes can land on the west end of Moose Lake and helicopters will be permitted to land at Dennison pit. Motorboats are allowed on Moose Lake and the east section of Yellowhead Lake. Restrictions on horsepower and type of motor may be considered to protect wildlife and for public safety. Mountain bike and cross country ski trails will be developed on utility rights of way. Canoeing and kayaking will be encouraged.

Commercial activities such as rafting, canoeing and kayaking will be permitted on Yellowhead and Moose Lakes.

MOUNT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK



Mount Robson Provincial Park

MASTER PLAN

Appendix D
Summary of Public Comments

BC Parks

Public Comments

Public Process

The planning process had two stages of public involvement. During the first phase, two information pieces were produced: a background document which summarized all the pertinent information; and an issue paper which highlighted the issues to be addressed in the master plan. The issues paper also included a questionnaire to obtain comments on the various management issues. Approximately 200 packages of these documents were distributed by mail. These packages were also given out to the 200 people who attended open houses in Jasper, McBride, Valemount, Prince George and Vancouver, held from November 26 to December 4, 1990. Meetings were held with interest groups to discuss issues. Over 154 submissions were received, summarized and used to develop the draft master plan.

The second stage of public involvement consisted of open houses to present the draft Master Plan. Open houses were held in Valemount, McBride, and Prince George from June 17 to 19, 1991. Copies were mailed out to 300 addresses. Approximately, 90 people attended the open houses. In addition, throughout the summer, the Master Plan was on display in the Visitor Centre in Mount Robson Park. We received 33 written responses on the draft Master Plan.

The public comments on each of the following issues are a synopsis of the written and verbal comments from the open houses, questionnaires, letters, comment forms and meetings that have taken place over the last year.

Issues

Role of the Park

Public Comment:

Many comments reflected the value of Mount Robson as a wilderness area, complementing the national parks in protecting and conserving the Canadian Rocky Mountains. The public emphasized the conservation and recreation role of the park, not only to the people of British Columbia but to the world.

Many mentioned the importance of the park's special natural and cultural features as well as the ease of access to backcountry and minimal commercial activities in the park.

Analysis:

Mount Robson Park is a world-class area with incomparable natural features and a rich history. Its recent designation as a World Heritage Site recognizes its role in both the BC Parks system and the world global system of protected areas. Its proximity to other protected areas such as the national parks creates a world-class opportunity not found many other places in the world to protect a large landscape for future generations.

BC Parks recognizes the significance of this park in the system of protected areas in the world and the comments received from the public support us in keeping it in a natural and undeveloped state while providing wilderness recreation opportunities.

Mount Robson also has a role in providing a outdoor recreation holiday, serving the travelling public and providing local recreation.

Finally, given the number of visitors that travel through the park on Highway 16 and stop at the Visitor Centre, Mount Robson Park has a role in providing information and educational opportunities to British Columbians and visitors to this province in terms of our natural and cultural heritage.

Plan Recommendation:

- In recognition of the wilderness and conservation values, a majority (80%) of the park has be zoned as Wilderness Recreation or Wilderness Conservation to protect these important natural and recreational features.

- Opportunities for serving the travelling public, providing n outdoor recreation destination and to provide local recreation opportunities will be maintained or created along the Travel Corridor, but not at the expense of the resources of the park.

- Information and educational programs will be implemented to provide information on conservation, BC Parks, the park and regional and provincial tourism to the many visitors to Mount Robson Park.

Zoning

Public Comment:

Public reaction was positive that the large part of the park was zoned under one of the two wilderness zones. However, some expressed concern that either the zoning was too restrictive for their activities or not restrictive enough. Others were concerned that the zoning of the Berg Lake Corridor as a Natural Environment Zone meant that the area would be further developed or not managed as a backcountry recreation experience.

Analysis:

In the Wilderness Conservation Zone, conservation of the remote and pristine wilderness is paramount. In the Wilderness Recreation Zone, protection of the remote and pristine wilderness is important as is the provision of low-level backcountry recreation. In this zone, facilities such as bear poles, primitive campsites and outhouses may be provided to protect the environment in that area.

The popularity and development of the Berg Lake Corridor precludes designation as a Wilderness Recreation Zone. Nonetheless, we recognize it as a world class backcountry experience that requires management to ensure the integrity of the environment and the quality of the experience.

Plan Recommendation:

- The majority of the park will be zoned as wilderness. Fifty-eight percent is zoned as Wilderness Conservation and 22% is zoned as Wilderness Recreation.

- The Berg Lake Corridor will be zoned as Natural Environment and will be managed as a backcountry experience. Due to the popularity of this trail, a management plan will be developed immediately.

Additions to Parks

Public Comment:

Three general areas were identified by the public to assess the straight line boundary on the west side of Mount Robson, to protect recreation and natural resources outside the park, and maintain the views of Mt. Robson from Highway 16. Some respondents did not believe that additions to the park were necessary; management concerns could be addressed through others means other than park designation.

Analysis:

Outside the west boundary of the park are recreational and natural resources that are worthy of park or ecological reserve designation. The spectacular views of Mt. Robson from Highway 16 are outside the park but require special management. The planning and management of these resources can be done in cooperation with other agencies such as the Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Transportation and Highways, and BC Lands.

Plan Recommendation:

- BC Parks will work closely with the Ministry of Forests and BC Lands to develop land use plans to protect significant recreation and natural resource values and maintain the integrity of the park boundaries.

- BC Parks will investigate the Small River area for possible park or ecological reserve designation.

- BC Parks will work closely with other agencies to maintain the scenic qualities from Highway 16, west of the park.

Vegetation Management

Public Comment:

Some members of the public would allow only natural fires to burn while others would undertake prescribed burning to enhance wildlife. Others would have a mixed strategy to allow some areas to burn (such as the backcountry) and to control fire in others (in the corridor). Most respondents supported the removal insect infested trees.

Analysis:

The vegetation of Mount Robson Park is important as wildlife habitat and contributes to the park experience, particularly along the Travel Corridor and the Berg Lake Corridor. However, after years of fire suppression and beetle control, the park has lost the natural ecological diversity of an evolving forest. In addition, with there has been a build up of fuels that could create a giant conflagration. Given that much of the park is wilderness, these natural processes should prevail as long as there is no danger to human life or threat to commercial forests.

Plan Recommendation:

- BC Parks will develop a long-term vegetation management strategy, in conjunction with Canadian Parks Service. Subcomponents of this overall strategy would include: fire suppression and management plan; disease and insect outbreak control program; a Travel Corridor vegetation management plan.

- Natural processes will predominate in the wilderness zones as long as visitors, adjacent commercial forest and park facilities are not in danger.

Wildlife Management

Public Comment:

Most of the public told us that natural processes should dominate and only if populations are in danger should man intervene. Most people would like to see only natural processes operating in the park but others supported minimal management to resemble the natural cycle. There is general distrust of man's ability to manipulate the environment. Many expressed concern for wildlife mortalities on the highway and railway.

Analysis:

After years of fire, disease and insect suppression, the forest has not been evolving naturally. As a result there has been changes in the natural diversity of habitats which in turn support wildlife populations. Sufficient numbers of a genetically diverse population and their habitats must be maintained to sustain viable population over the long term.

Plan Recommendation:

- In conjunction with the Canadian Park Service and BC Environment, BC Parks will develop a long-term management plan for wildlife. This plan would incorporate habitat requirements, critical habitats and would include a Travel Corridor wildlife management plan based on critical feeding habitats, winter range and migration routes.

- Enhancement activities will be considered in the Natural Environment and Intensive Recreation Zones, but not in the wilderness zones.

Fish Management

Public Comment:

Many respondents indicated that enhancement or stocking of fish populations was not appropriate activity for a World Heritage Site, where protection of the natural system is primary. Some individuals supported enhancement in accessible lakes that are capable of supporting a fish population and that already have fish introduced.

Analysis:

Fishing is an appropriate activity in parks. However, there is limited opportunities in Mount Robson Park due to the cold silty lakes and streams. In response to the call for keeping the park natural, enhancement steps will be restricted to accessible lakes in the Intensive Recreation Zone that have introduced fish populations.

Plan Recommendation:

- Enhancement measures will continue for Portal and Witney Lakes as indicated through a monitoring program.
- Moose and Yellowhead Lakes will be assessed for potential fishery enhancement through natural production.
- All alpine lakes will be maintained in a natural state.

Cultural Resources

Public Comment:

Most respondents supported the preservation and presentation of the history of the park and offered suggestions for displays in the Visitor Centre, self-guided tours, interpretative trails, and displays at Lucerne.

Analysis:

This park has a varied and rich history dating to prehistoric times. With number of visitors that travel Highway 16, the park is perfectly situated to present this colourful heritage.

Plan Recommendation:

- An interpretive assessment and a management strategy will be developed to protect and present these cultural resources
- Day-use trails will be developed to offer access to and interpretation of these features.

Aircraft Access

Public Comment:

Many of the comments addressed aircraft access, particularly helicopter access to the Berg Lake Corridor. The opinions varied from this type of access being well-accepted, to it being used for disabled only, to it being for emergencies and rescues only. Many respondents were opposed to the noise which disrupts the backcountry experience. Others were philosophically opposed to helicopters in parks.

Analysis:

The control of aircraft access into Mount Robson Park would maintain the backcountry and wilderness experience for which the park is well-known. Given that airspace is a federal jurisdiction, BC Parks can only control landings.

Plan Recommendation:

- Through zoning 80% of the park Wilderness Recreation and Wilderness Conservation, we have made a commitment to control aircraft access. Helicopters and other aircraft are not permitted to land in the Wilderness Conservation Zone and are tightly controlled through permits in the Wilderness Recreation Zone with landing sites being designated and timing and number of landings being identified.

- As BC Parks does not govern air space, we will work with companies who fly over the park, particularly the Berg Lake Corridor, to control noise and disruption to park users and wildlife.

Heli-skiing

Public Comment:

Heli-skiing in the park received substantial comment. Heli-skiing was seen by some as a legitimate activity but was strongly criticized by most, both philosophically and as an inappropriate recreational activity for a provincial park and a world heritage site.

Analysis:

As much of the land outside the park has been committed to this activity and keeping with the wilderness character of the park, mechanized access will be prohibited or restricted in a majority of the park. However, there is one opportunity in the Mount Longstaff area which makes up less than 5% of the park where heli-skiers could enjoy the park. Given some guidelines and mutual cooperation, this activity could have minimal impact on other users and wildlife.

Plan Recommendation:

- A trial heli-skiing permit will be extended to the Mount Longstaff area. BC Parks will work with BC Environment and BC Lands to monitor the impacts of this activity both inside and outside the park. This area has been zoned Wilderness Recreation to tightly control landings, runs and timing.

- Heli-skiing is not appropriate in other areas in the park due to wildlife and wilderness considerations.

Management of the Berg Lake Corridor

Public Comment:

Most comments focused of the Berg Lake area as it is the most well-known part of Mount Robson Park and is a world class destination. Many respondents indicated that the level of development and visitation to the area is appropriate; however, they were concerned about future use of this popular backcountry experience. Many commented on conflicts with horses, mountain bikes and helicopters.

Analysis:

The Berg Lake Corridor is an outstanding experience in the BC Parks system and in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Its popularity nationally and internationally has implications for overuse. As visitors have high expectations for their experience on the Berg Lake Trail, a management plan is needed to address management issues to maintain the quality of experience and to protect the environment.

Plan Recommendation:

- A management plan for the Berg Lake Corridor will be developed to address management issues such as helicopter access, numbers of hikers, horse use and to develop action plan to manage the Berg Lake Corridor as one of the premier experiences in the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

Hiking and Camping

Public Comment:

A variety of users and activities occur in the comments. Some of those engaging in backcountry activities that depend on a wilderness environment would like more hiking opportunities. Those who are travelling through or stop for a holiday would like more day-use activities. Many suggested that frontcountry car camping developments be left to the private sector outside the park.

Analysis:

A spectrum of recreation opportunities is offered in Mount Robson Park. To divert some of the demand from the Berg Lake Corridor, other backcountry opportunities could be provided. Day-use opportunities have been limited in the past; given the resources available in the park, more could be created. However, any recreational opportunity that is created will not occur at the risk of environmental damage.

Plan Recommendation:

- Campground use will be monitored to determine future development.
- Wilderness recreation opportunities will be provided in Yellowhead Mountain/Rink Lakes area, Alpland and Emerald Ridge areas.
- In recognition of the importance of an undisturbed wilderness for a particular kind of backcountry experience, 80% of the park has been zone Wilderness Conservation or Wilderness Recreation.
- Day-use opportunities will be developed in the Intensive Recreation Zone including include upgrading of existing trails and development of historic and nature trails.
- BC Parks will work with the private sector outside the park to meet development demands and to meet the demands for specialized backcountry activities such as hut-to-hut skiing or heli-hiking.

Horse Use

Public Comment:

The public told us that horse use is acceptable but there are limits in terms of environmental impacts and numbers that are appropriate. The horse lobby want more access to the Berg Lake Trail while hikers were reluctant to have meet more horses on this popular trail.

Analysis:

Horse use is a significant historical use in the Rocky Mountains; however, it is not without its impacts. The increased popularity of the Berg Lake Corridor by hikers has put increasing demands on the trail and on the experience. On the other hand, more commercial guides and private parties are wanting to experience the Rocky Mountain wilderness.

Plan Recommendation:

- Horse traffic on the Berg Lake Corridor will not increase and steps be taken to address the environmental and recreational impacts of the area.

- Other commercial users and private parties be directed to the Moose River Valley. A corral at Robson Pass will be available for day use to allow these parties to access Berg Lake by foot.

- The Resplendent Valley Wilderness Conservation Zone is closed to all horses and the Emerald Wilderness Recreation Zone is closed to commercial use.

Mountain Biking

Public Comment:

Most people who commented felt that mountain biking was a suitable activity for a park but should be limited to roadways. Many commented that mountain biking was not an appropriate activity on the popular Berg Lake Trail.

Analysis:

Mountain biking is an appropriate activity in parks if done in a safe manner and if there are minimal impacts to the environment and other users. However, the Berg Lake Trail is too hazardous in some spots and too popular with other users to permit bikes on the whole length of the trail. Mountain bike routes could be created on the existing roads and utility rights of way.

Plan Recommendation:

- Bikes will be limited to the Kinney Lake area on the Berg Lake Trail and Rockingham Creek campsite on the Mt. Fitzwilliam Trail.

- BC Parks will develop cycling trails on rights of way and an etiquette program.

Commercial Use

Public Comment:

Some members of the public felt that commercial activities in parks are not appropriate in a provincial park. Others indicated that non-consumptive low impact activities such as recreational guiding, horse riding, rafting are suitable. Some would like to see at least the same amount of commercial activities in the park; others would like to see more, as commercial operators provide a safe means for visitors to see the park.

Analysis:

BC Parks feels that some low impact, non-consumptive commercial guiding is appropriate in Mount Robson Park; however, these activities will not occur at the expense of the environment, wildlife and other users.

Plan Recommendation:

- BC Parks will identify all commercial guiding opportunities, evaluate the current provision, and if opportunities are available, issue permits for new activities through a competitive process.

- Before a permit for commercial guiding is given, an assessment of its impact and appropriateness will be undertaken.

Winter Recreation

Public Comment:

Most respondents indicated that winter recreation activities were appropriate for Mount Robson and focused on the non-mechanized forms which were considered more appropriate for the wilderness setting. There was minimal support for some mechanized activities, particularly heli-skiing.

Analysis:

Winter recreation is limited in the park given the avalanche hazards. However, opportunities for cross-country and backcountry skiing. These may be well provided by a commercial guide. There is also limited opportunity for heli-skiing on Mount Longstaff.

Plan Recommendation:

- Cross-country trails will be developed on the utility rights of way.
- BC Parks will work with commercial operators to provide other cross-country and backcountry opportunities.
- A trial heli-skiing operation will be allowed on the Mount Longstaff Glacier.